

HB 2559 A -A2 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Veterans, Emergency Management, Federal and World Affairs

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Meeting Dates: 4/29, 5/8

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

The measure allows the Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs to use a summary of benefits letter from the United States Department of Veterans' Affairs when determining eligibility for benefits or services, including the Veterans Dental Program.

Fiscal impact: No fiscal impact

Revenue impact: No revenue impact

HOUSE VOTE: Ayes, 52; Nays, 0

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Getting access to discharge paperwork (DD 214)
- Lack of information on exiting the military and transitioning to non-military roles

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

-A2 The amendment allows any state agency, rather than just the Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs, to use a summary of benefits letter to determine eligibility for benefits or services.

BACKGROUND:

The United States Department of Veterans' Affairs (USDVA) and Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs (ODVA) each offer various benefits and programs available to service members and veterans of the United States Armed Forces. These benefits can cover education, health care, housing assistance, life insurance, retirement and pensions, and job seeking and training, among other topics. Length of service and other factors such as disability status impact benefit eligibility. The USDVA provides benefit letters that in some cases serve as proof of eligibility to receive benefits.

[House Bill 4095 \(2022\)](#) established the Veterans Dental Program within the Oregon Health Authority, and [House Bill 5029 \(2023\)](#) allocated additional funding to the program. The program provides the same dental benefits as those for enrollees in the Oregon Health Plan/Medicaid (OHP), without corresponding copayments, deductibles, or cost sharing, to veterans who are Oregon residents, ineligible for OHP, and who have income up to 400 percent of the federal poverty guidelines.

House Bill 2559 A allows ODVA to use summary of benefits letters from the USDVA to determine eligibility for benefits or services.