

HB 2386 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Carrier: Rep. Grayber

House Committee On Emergency Management, General Government, and Veterans

Action Date: 01/30/25

Action: Do Pass.

Vote: 7-0-0-0

Yeas: 7 - Boice, Evans, Grayber, Lewis, Skarlatos, Tran, Watanabe

Fiscal: Has minimal fiscal impact

Revenue: No revenue impact

Prepared By: Beverly Anderson, LPRO Analyst

Meeting Dates: 1/28, 1/30

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

The measure authorizes the Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs (ODVA) to adopt rules to carry out the laws on unclaimed remains of veterans and their family members.

Detailed Summary

Authorizes the ODVA to adopt rules to implement laws concerning the unclaimed remains of veterans, veterans' spouses, dependents, and survivors of veterans. Requires veterans' remains coordinators (or county veterans' service officers) carry out their duties in accordance with adopted rules.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- The measure is a technical fix of House Bill 2147 (2023)
- The Department of Justice found a technical error regarding ODVA implementing rules in lieu of the Oregon Mortuary and Cemetery Board
- Questions about the current number of unclaimed veterans' remains in Oregon.

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

Any member of the U.S. Armed Forces who dies while on active duty or veteran discharged under conditions other than dishonorable may be eligible for burial in a national cemetery. This benefit also applies to spouses and dependents of veterans. However, burial benefits do not always include covering the cost of the burial. There have been instances, both in Oregon and elsewhere, of the cremated remains of veterans being discovered and unclaimed, and thus uninterred.

House Bill 2147 (2023) directed counties to designate "veterans' remains coordinators" to work in a volunteer capacity to identify unclaimed cremated or reduced remains located within the county, establish the eligibility of the individual for interment in a national cemetery, and arrange for the interment of the remains. House Bill 2386 explicitly authorizes the Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs to adopt administrative rules to govern the program.