

HOUSE AMENDMENTS TO HOUSE BILL 2845

By COMMITTEE ON EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT, GENERAL GOVERNMENT, AND
VETERANS

April 15

1 On page 1 of the printed bill, line 2, after “provisions,” delete the rest of the line and insert
2 “amending ORS 192.390, 406.020, 406.140, 406.462, 408.115 and 408.425; and declaring an
3 emergency.”.

4 Delete lines 4 through 22 and delete pages 2 through 5 and insert:

5 **“SECTION 1. This 2025 Act shall be known and may be cited as the 2025 Oregon Veterans’**
6 **Services Supplemental Investments Initiative.**

“FUNDING GOAL

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10 **“SECTION 2. It is the goal of the Legislative Assembly to fund the Department of**
11 **Veterans’ Affairs at a level that is no less than \$10,000,000, from the General Fund, as**
12 **measured in 2015 and adjusted for inflation as calculated by the Legislative Fiscal Office.**

“ADDITIONAL STAFF POSITIONS

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16 **“SECTION 3. (1) No later than the dates specified in subsections (2), (3) and (4) of this**
17 **section, the Director of Veterans’ Affairs shall establish, hire for and staff within the De-**
18 **partment of Veterans’ Affairs the following additional full-time equivalent positions:**

19 **“(a) Two coordinators for incarcerated veterans.**

20 **“(b) One women veterans coordinator.**

21 **“(c) One addiction services coordinator.**

22 **“(d) One behavioral health coordinator.**

23 **“(e) One state approving agency staff.**

24 **“(f) Two coordinators for houseless veterans.**

25 **“(g) Two financial recovery ombudspersons.**

26 **“(h) One bridge grant support coordinator.**

27 **“(i) One veterans employment coordinator.**

28 **“(2) The director shall establish, hire for and staff four of the positions listed in sub-**
29 **section (1) of this section no later than July 1, 2026. Three of the positions must be:**

30 **“(a) One coordinator for incarcerated veterans.**

31 **“(b) One addiction services coordinator.**

32 **“(c) One veterans employment coordinator.**

33 **“(3) The director shall establish, hire for and staff four of the remaining positions listed**
34 **in subsection (1) of this section no later than July 1, 2027.**

35 **“(4) The director shall establish, hire for and staff the four remaining positions listed in**

1 subsection (1) of this section no later than July 1, 2028.

2 **“SECTION 4. The position of Veterans Employment Coordinator is created in the De-**
3 **partment of Veterans’ Affairs. The responsibilities of the coordinator include, but are not**
4 **limited to, all of the following:**

5 **“(1) Assisting veterans with finding employment.**

6 **“(2) Providing veterans with career and job resources.**

7 **“(3) Serving as a liaison between the Department of Veterans’ Affairs and county**
8 **veterans’ service officers.**

9 **“(4) Contacting any service member who separates from the Oregon National Guard**
10 **within two weeks from the date of separation.**

11 **“(5) Contacting any service member who separates from the Armed Forces of the United**
12 **States and who resides in or is moving into this state within two weeks from the date the**
13 **coordinator is informed of the service member separating and residing in or moving into this**
14 **state.**

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16 **“DIRECTOR AND DEPUTY DIRECTOR**

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18 **“SECTION 5. ORS 406.020 is amended to read:**

19 **“406.020. The Department of Veterans’ Affairs shall be under the supervision and control of the**
20 **Director of Veterans’ Affairs. The Governor shall appoint the director subject to confirmation by**
21 **the Senate in the manner provided in ORS 171.562 and 171.565. The appointment may not be made**
22 **without the written approval of the Advisory Committee provided for in ORS 406.210. The director**
23 **shall be a veteran[,] who received a discharge or release under other than dishonorable con-**
24 **ditions, chosen on the basis of executive and administrative ability.**

25 **“SECTION 6. The Director of Veterans’ Affairs, subject to approval by the Governor,**
26 **may appoint a deputy director. In appointing a deputy director, the director shall consider**
27 **the experience that a veteran may bring if a veteran is appointed to the position. The deputy**
28 **director serves at the pleasure of the director, has full authority to act for the director and**
29 **is subject to the control of the director.**

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31 **“VETERANS SUICIDE PREVENTION PILOT PROGRAMS**

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33 **“SECTION 7. (1) As used in this section, ‘veteran’ has the meaning given that term in**
34 **ORS 408.225. ‘Veteran’ includes a disabled veteran as defined in ORS 408.225.**

35 **“(2) The Department of Veterans’ Affairs shall develop and implement one or more pilot**
36 **programs for suicide prevention and workforce preparation. The purpose of the pilot pro-**
37 **grams is to help veterans with suicide prevention and transition to the workforce and busi-**
38 **ness community.**

39 **“(3) The department shall implement the pilot programs under this section by awarding**
40 **grants through a request for proposal process to:**

41 **“(a) Entities involved in pairing suicide prevention and housing with workforce training**
42 **and preparation in the agriculture, fishery, forestry or natural resources industries;**

43 **“(b) Entities that provide temporary, low-barrier suicide prevention programs; and**

44 **“(c) Courtney Place Veterans Housing.**

45 **“(4) The department shall:**

1 described in ORS 406.450 on a quarterly basis as follows:

2 “(a) Each fiscal year, the director shall notify each county governing body of the amount
3 of moneys to be distributed to the county governing body for the fiscal year.

4 “(b) The county governing body shall provide the director a copy of the county’s budget
5 for the services to be provided by the county veterans’ service officer for the fiscal year.

6 “(c) At the end of each calendar quarter, the county governing body shall provide the
7 director a report on the moneys the county expended during the calendar quarter for the
8 services provided by the county veterans’ service officer.

9 “(d) Upon receipt of the county governing body’s quarterly report, the director shall
10 distribute to the county governing body a portion of moneys allocated to the county gov-
11 erning body in an amount that is based on the proportion of all moneys budgeted for all
12 services provided by county veterans’ service officers that were expended during the calen-
13 dar quarter.

14 “(e) At the end of each calendar quarter, the county governing body may also provide the
15 director documentation for moneys the county expended during a previous calendar quarter
16 in the fiscal year for the services provided by the county veterans’ service officer that the
17 county had not previously reported to the director and for which the county governing body
18 has not received a distribution of moneys from the director. Upon receipt of the documen-
19 tation, the director shall distribute to the county governing body a portion of moneys allo-
20 cated to the county governing body in an amount that is based on the proportion of all
21 moneys budgeted for all services provided by county veterans’ service officers that were ex-
22 pended during the calendar quarter within which the county expended the moneys for which
23 the county governing body provided the director documentation.

24 “(3) At the end of each fiscal year, the director shall calculate the remaining moneys not
25 distributed during the fiscal year and distribute the remaining moneys using a formula es-
26 tablished under ORS 406.454 to each county governing body that expended 90 percent or more
27 of the moneys that the county budgeted for services provided by the county veterans’ service
28 officer for the fiscal year as specified under subsection (2)(b) of this section. The director
29 shall distribute the remaining moneys within 90 days from the last date of the fiscal year.

30 “[2] (4) Notwithstanding subsection (1) of this section, the director may reduce the amount of
31 moneys distributed to county governing bodies for county veterans’ service officers if there is a de-
32 crease in the amount of General Fund or State Lottery Fund revenues appropriated to the director
33 for the purposes described in ORS 406.450 for the same period of time.

34 “**SECTION 12.** Not later than January 2, 2027, the Department of Veterans’ Affairs shall
35 prepare and submit a report to the interim committees of the Legislative Assembly related
36 to veterans and the Association of Oregon Counties on the distribution of moneys under the
37 process provided by the amendments to ORS 406.462 by section 11 of this 2025 Act.

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39 **“COUNTY RECORDS: VETERAN DISCHARGE PAPERS**

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41 “**SECTION 13.** ORS 408.425 is amended to read:

42 “408.425. (1) Each county clerk who receives a request to inspect veteran discharge papers that
43 are recorded under ORS 408.420 shall produce the recorded discharge papers for inspection if:

44 “(a) The request for inspection is made in writing;

45 “(b) The request sets forth the name, address and telephone number of the requester;

1 “(c) The request sets forth the name and the date of birth or the last four digits of the Social
2 Security number of the veteran; and

3 “(d) The request is made by:

4 “(A) The veteran or [*the spouse, legal guardian*] **a person holding a power of attorney for the**
5 **veteran** or personal representative of the veteran; **or**

6 “[*(B) A county veterans’ service officer appointed under ORS 408.410;*]

7 “[*(C) A representative of the Department of Veterans’ Affairs; or*]

8 “[*(D)*] **(B)** A licensed funeral establishment seeking to ascertain if a decedent was a veteran for
9 the purpose of obtaining veteran’s burial benefits.

10 “(2) This section does not create a cause of action and may not be asserted as the basis of a
11 per se negligence claim.

12 “(3) Each county clerk may adopt additional policies in order to protect recorded discharge pa-
13 pers from malicious or unlawful use and policies regarding copying of recorded discharge papers.

14 “(4) Each county clerk shall maintain in the records of the county clerk a copy of each request
15 for inspection of recorded discharge information for a period of at least 10 years after the date the
16 request is received by the county clerk.

17 “**SECTION 14.** ORS 192.390 is amended to read:

18 “192.390. (1) Notwithstanding ORS 192.338, 192.345 and 192.355 and except as otherwise provided
19 in ORS 192.398, public records that are more than 25 years old shall be available for inspection.

20 “**(2) This section does not apply to records that are exempt from disclosure pursuant to**
21 **ORS 192.355 (37) or 408.425.**

22 “**VETERAN EDUCATIONAL BRIDGE GRANT PROGRAM**

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25 “**SECTION 15.** ORS 408.115 is amended to read:

26 “408.115. (1) The Veteran Educational Bridge Grant Program is established within the Depart-
27 ment of Veterans’ Affairs. Under the program, the department shall conduct outreach and provide
28 grants to veterans who:

29 “(a) Are pursuing and enrolled in a course of study that is in or part of:

30 “(A) Any program for which United States Department of Veterans Affairs education benefits
31 may be used;

32 “(B) A career school licensed under ORS 345.010 to 345.340;

33 “(C) An apprenticeship program that is registered with the State Apprenticeship and Training
34 Council; or

35 “(D) An on-the-job training program offered by a public employer;

36 “[*(b)(A) Are eligible to receive federal, state or other financial assistance based on prior service in*
37 *the Armed Forces of the United States; or*]

38 “[*(B) Demonstrate a need for student financial aid from any federal or state assistance program,*
39 *including Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965;*]

40 “[*(c)(A)*] **(b)(A)** Are unable to complete a degree, apprenticeship or training program within the
41 expected completion period because one or more required courses or apprenticeship or training
42 hours are not available until a later date; [*or*]

43 “(B) Have debt on a student account due to an overpayment of federal or state tuition benefits
44 or prior course withdrawal that prevents enrollment in a future term; [*and*] **or**

45 “**(C) Are experiencing an instance of financial hardship that is interfering with or could**

1 **endanger the ability to remain enrolled in a degree, apprenticeship or training program; and**

2 **“(d) (c) Are making satisfactory academic or training progress [or progress] in a program de-**
3 **scribed in paragraph (a) of this subsection.**

4 **“(2) Grants under the program:**

5 **“(a) May not exceed [\$5,000] \$10,000 per veteran; and**

6 **“(b) May be made only when there are sufficient moneys in the Veteran Educational Bridge**
7 **Grant Program Fund established under ORS 408.125 to make the grants.**

8 **“(3) The Department of Veterans’ Affairs shall adopt rules for the implementation and operation**
9 **of the program, including eligibility requirements for grant applicants.**

10 **“(4) As used in this section, ‘veteran’ has the meaning given that term in ORS 408.225 and in-**
11 **cludes disabled veterans, as defined in ORS 408.225.**

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13 **“VETERANS’ COURT**

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15 **“SECTION 16. (1) The Department of Veterans’ Affairs shall work with the Oregon**
16 **Criminal Justice Commission and the Judicial Department to develop a plan for establishing**
17 **and maintaining a veterans’ court in each county or judicial district.**

18 **“(2) The Judicial Department shall submit a report on the plan in the manner provided**
19 **by ORS 192.245, and may include recommendations for legislation, to the interim committees**
20 **of the Legislative Assembly related to veterans no later than September 15, 2026.**

21 **“(3) As used in this section, ‘veterans’ court’ means a specialized court or court program**
22 **for defendants who are military veterans.**

23 **“SECTION 17. Section 16 of this 2025 Act is repealed on January 2, 2027.**

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25 **“CAPTIONS**

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27 **“SECTION 18. The unit captions used in this 2025 Act are provided only for the conven-**
28 **ience of the reader and do not become part of the statutory law of this state or express any**
29 **legislative intent in the enactment of this 2025 Act.**

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31 **“EFFECTIVE DATE**

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33 **“SECTION 19. This 2025 Act being necessary for the immediate preservation of the public**
34 **peace, health and safety, an emergency is declared to exist, and this 2025 Act takes effect**
35 **July 1, 2025.”**