

A-Engrossed
Senate Bill 10

Ordered by the Senate March 31
Including Senate Amendments dated March 31

Sponsored by Senator COURTNEY, Representative MINNIS

SUMMARY

The following summary is not prepared by the sponsors of the measure and is not a part of the body thereof subject to consideration by the Legislative Assembly. It is an editor's brief statement of the essential features of the measure.

[Creates] **Requires that Director of Veterans' Affairs establish** Veterans' Service Officer Expansion Program [in *Oregon Department of Administrative Services*]. Creates Veterans' Service Officer Expansion Program Fund.

Appropriates moneys to [department] fund for program.

Declares emergency, effective July 1, 2005.

A BILL FOR AN ACT

1
2 Relating to veterans' service officers; appropriating money; and declaring an emergency.

3 **Be It Enacted by the People of the State of Oregon:**

4 **SECTION 1. (1) The Director of Veterans' Affairs shall establish a Veterans' Service Of-**
5 **ficer Expansion Program. The purpose of the program is to expand the services provided by**
6 **county veterans' service officers appointed under ORS 408.410. The program shall provide**
7 **veterans and their spouses and dependents with:**

8 (a) **Access to information regarding veterans' benefit programs; and**

9 (b) **Assistance by trained, accredited representatives in applying for all federal and state**
10 **benefits and aid to which veterans and their spouses and dependents may be entitled and in**
11 **appealing any denial of benefits or aid.**

12 (2) **The Director of Veterans' Affairs shall adopt by rule a formula to distribute to county**
13 **governing bodies funds appropriated to the Veterans' Service Officer Expansion Program.**
14 **In developing the distribution formula, the director shall consider factors including, but not**
15 **limited to:**

16 (a) **The number of veterans residing in a county;**

17 (b) **The number of service officers appointed in a county under ORS 408.410; and**

18 (c) **The salary and benefits paid to veterans' benefits counselors employed by the De-**
19 **partment of Veterans' Affairs.**

20 (3) **The director shall adopt rules to implement this section. The rules shall include but**
21 **need not be limited to:**

22 (a) **Development and implementation of a distribution formula;**

23 (b) **Establishment of a data collection and reporting system; and**

24 (c) **Establishment of procedures to identify veterans or their spouses or dependents who**
25 **are receiving or may be eligible for assistance from the Department of Human Services.**

26 **SECTION 2. The Director of Veterans' Affairs may not reduce payments made to county**

NOTE: Matter in **boldfaced** type in an amended section is new; matter [*italic and bracketed*] is existing law to be omitted. New sections are in **boldfaced** type.

1 governing bodies from moneys appropriated to the Department of Veterans' Affairs in the
2 legislatively approved budget for financing the employment and activities of service officers
3 appointed under ORS 408.410.

4 **SECTION 3.** The Veterans' Service Officer Expansion Program Fund is established in the
5 State Treasury, separate and distinct from the General Fund. The Veterans' Service Officer
6 Expansion Program Fund shall consist of moneys appropriated to the fund by the Legislative
7 Assembly. The moneys in the Veterans' Service Officer Expansion Program Fund are con-
8 tinuously appropriated to the Director of Veterans' Affairs for the program. Interest earned
9 by the fund shall be credited to the fund.

10 **SECTION 4.** In addition to and not in lieu of any other appropriation, there is appropri-
11 ated to the Veterans' Service Officer Expansion Program Fund, for the biennium beginning
12 July 1, 2005, out of the General Fund, the amount of \$5 million, which may be expended for
13 the Veterans' Service Officer Expansion Program.

14 **SECTION 5.** This 2005 Act being necessary for the immediate preservation of the public
15 peace, health and safety, an emergency is declared to exist, and this 2005 Act takes effect
16 July 1, 2005.