

# Senate Bill 143

Sponsored by Senators MONNES ANDERSON, BOQUIST (Pre-session filed.)

## 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 **as introduced**.

Directs Department of Veterans' Affairs to develop and implement one or more programs statewide to establish campus veteran resource centers and campus veteran resource coordinators, or expand and enhance existing centers and coordinators, on campuses of community colleges and public universities to help veterans successfully transition from military service to college life, succeed in college, complete educational goals and transition from college to workforce and community.

Appropriates moneys from General Fund to Department of Veterans' Affairs for purpose of implementing programs.

Declares emergency, effective July 1, 2017.

## A BILL FOR AN ACT

1  
2 Relating to provision of campus veteran resources; and declaring an emergency.

3       Whereas in fiscal year 2015, expenditures by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs  
4 for Oregon veterans and their families totaled \$2.6 billion; and

5       Whereas in fiscal year 2015, almost 13,500 Oregon veterans received more than \$145.9 million  
6 in education benefits from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs that included financial  
7 resources in support of attending community colleges, universities and certification and training  
8 programs; and

9       Whereas one of the priorities in Oregon's Higher Education Coordinating Commission 2016-2020  
10 Strategic Plan is to focus on outcomes that promote life successes; and

11       Whereas the purpose of a campus veterans program is to provide resources to help veterans  
12 transition from the military into the community college or university experience, complete their  
13 certificate or degree program and transition into the workforce and community; and

14       Whereas there are currently campus veteran resource centers and campus veteran coordinators  
15 at five community colleges and universities in Oregon that provide a place for veterans to connect  
16 with other veterans, study, network, connect with local, state, county and federal resources and  
17 obtain help and support from campus veteran coordinators; and

18       Whereas a strong veterans program on a community college or university campus can help at-  
19 tract and retain veterans and provide assistance to complete their education, which will result in  
20 increasing and retaining federal educational funds for veterans; now, therefore,

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

22 **SECTION 1. (1) As used in this section:**

23 (a) "Community college" has the meaning given that term in ORS 341.005.

24 (b) "Public university" has the meaning given that term in ORS 352.002.

25 (c)(A) "Veteran" has the meaning given that term in ORS 408.225.

26 (B) "Veteran" includes a "disabled veteran" as defined in ORS 408.225.

27 (2) **The Department of Veterans' Affairs shall develop and implement one or more pro-**  
28 **grams statewide to establish or expand campus veteran resource centers and campus vet-**

**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 **eran resource coordinators on the campuses of community colleges and public universities.**  
2 **The purpose of the programs is to help veterans successfully transition from military service**  
3 **to college life, succeed in college, complete educational goals and transition from college to**  
4 **the workforce and the community.**

5 **(3) The department shall implement programs under this section by awarding grants to**  
6 **community colleges or public universities that:**

7 **(a) Establish new, or expand and enhance existing, campus veteran resource centers on**  
8 **campus premises;**

9 **(b) Recruit and employ campus veteran resource coordinators who can serve as liaisons**  
10 **to provide advocacy, understanding and resource connections for veterans;**

11 **(c) Attract veterans to enroll in and attend educational programs at community colleges**  
12 **and public universities;**

13 **(d) Provide assistance, guidance and support to veterans in completing educational goals**  
14 **and objectives;**

15 **(e) Provide resources to college administration, faculty and staff to facilitate an under-**  
16 **standing and appreciation of the strengths, unique challenges and needs of veterans and their**  
17 **families;**

18 **(f) Refer campus veterans to local county veterans' service officers appointed under ORS**  
19 **408.410 who assist veterans in obtaining federal and state veteran benefits;**

20 **(g) Assist veterans in successfully transitioning to work and community life by connect-**  
21 **ing veterans with workforce and employment resources; and**

22 **(h) Provide resources and matching funds in an amount to be determined by the depart-**  
23 **ment.**

24 **(4) The department shall provide two types of grants to community colleges and public**  
25 **universities under this section as follows:**

26 **(a) Grants to campuses with existing campus veteran resource centers and campus vet-**  
27 **eran resource coordinators for expansion and enhancement including, but not limited to,**  
28 **training for campus veteran coordinators, computer and other equipment and supplies, ad-**  
29 **ditional staff, veteran events, access to workforce and community resources that were not**  
30 **previously available and meeting other identified needs for the successful and continued op-**  
31 **eration of the existing centers and coordinators; and**

32 **(b) Grants to campuses that do not currently have campus veteran resource centers or**  
33 **campus veteran resource coordinators to establish new centers and recruit and employ co-**  
34 **ordinators.**

35 **(5) In addition to awarding grants, the department shall:**

36 **(a) Create opportunities for campus veteran resource coordinators to network with each**  
37 **other to share best practices, resources and other relevant information;**

38 **(b) Provide training to campus veteran resource coordinators on specific topics that will**  
39 **benefit veterans before, during and after college life; and**

40 **(c) Provide technical assistance in establishing and maintaining centers and coordinators**  
41 **on campuses.**

42 **(6) Services and assistance provided through the campus veteran resource centers and**  
43 **campus veteran resource coordinators may not duplicate services provided by county**  
44 **veterans' service officers appointed under ORS 408.410, as described in ORS 406.450, but may**  
45 **provide additional information and aid that is not available through county veterans' service**

1 **officers.**

2 (7) The department may collaborate and work with the Higher Education Coordinating  
3 Commission in developing and implementing programs under this section.

4 (8) The department may solicit and accept gifts, grants and donations from public and  
5 private sources to further the purposes of this section.

6 (9) The department may adopt rules to implement the provisions of this section.

7 **SECTION 2.** In addition to and not in lieu of any other appropriation, there is appropri-  
8 ated to the Department of Veterans' Affairs, for the biennium beginning July 1, 2017, out of  
9 the General Fund, the amount of \$\_\_\_\_\_, which may be expended for the purposes of im-  
10 plementing section 1 of this 2017 Act.

11 **SECTION 3.** This 2017 Act being necessary for the immediate preservation of the public  
12 peace, health and safety, an emergency is declared to exist, and this 2017 Act takes effect  
13 July 1, 2017.

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