



EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 08-08

GOVERNOR'S TASK FORCE ON VETERANS SERVICES

The unanticipated consequences of the Afghanistan and Iraq Wars on Oregon families and the Oregon military have sparked immense interest in veterans issues among Oregonians. In Oregon alone, over 7,000 National Guard mobilizations for active duty service have occurred since September 11, 2001. Nationwide, more than 1.2 million men and women have already served in Afghanistan and Iraq. Many more servicemen and women are expected to deploy to Afghanistan and Iraq one or more times before the war is over.

Since 2001, Congress has authorized funds for major combat operations abroad while failing to keep pace with the needs of our veterans. For example, in Fiscal Year 2008, over \$625 billion will be spent by the Department of Defense on military programs and the Afghanistan and Iraq wars. Yet in FY 2008, the Department of Defense and the Veterans Administration combined will spend less than 10% of that amount, \$61 billion, on healthcare for veterans and dependents.

In all, more than 361,000 living Oregonians have served in uniform. While the veterans issues associated with the present Afghanistan and Iraq Wars are significant, those issues exist within the wider context of how we address veterans care. The impending retirement of Vietnam-era veterans, and the complexities associated with end-of-life care for World War II and Korean War veterans, present important policy questions and budgetary consequences for Oregon.

Uncoordinated attempts to provide care to World War II, Korean and Vietnam-era war veterans has created confusion among veterans advocates, agencies and families. At times, natural allies have worked at cross-purposes due to the constraints of existing policies, procedures, and programs. The lack of a comprehensive approach to veterans care limits the impact of scarce available resources and restrains our capacity to help veterans who deserve and need care.

All Oregon veterans would benefit from a collaborative and comprehensive examination and inventory of existing state and federal policies, programs and services, with a focus on three specific areas: (1) reintegration services; (2) post-separation access to services; and (3) retirement/senior care.

A programmatic evaluation is necessary to assess the wide scale and scope of services and activities associated with veterans care. The purpose of this evaluation will be to facilitate dialogue between veterans advocates, agencies, families, policy staff and the public about priorities for future action, as well as to promote the efficient use of limited resources.



EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 08-08
PAGE TWO

NOW THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY DIRECTED AND ORDERED:

1. The Governor's Task Force on Veterans Services (Task Force) is established.
2. The Task Force shall consist of twenty-seven (27) members appointed by the Governor including:
 - a. One or more representatives from local, state and federal government;
 - b. Veterans from at least two distinct military conflicts;
 - c. Representatives from veterans support organizations;
 - d. Representatives from the Oregon Reintegration Team;
 - e. One member of the Oregon Senate designated by the Senate President;
 - f. One member of the Oregon House of Representatives, designated by the Speaker of the House; and
 - g. Representatives of the public at large.
3. The Governor shall appoint the chair of the Task Force, who shall establish an agenda and provide leadership and direction for the Task Force. The chair may appoint and approve the creation of subcommittees of the Task Force. The chair may, on behalf of the Governor, request participation of representatives of other federal, state, county and non-profit associations for the purposes of this effort.
4. The Task Force shall compile, review and evaluate research on existing veterans policies, procedures and programs. This review shall be organized to reflect three major policy areas: (1) reintegration services; (2) post-separation access to services; and (3) retirement/senior care.
5. The Task Force shall develop an inventory of existing programs, perform a programmatic evaluation of identified programs and make recommendations for action. In fulfilling its charge, the Task Force shall:
 - a. Compile a program inventory;
 - b. Prepare a baseline evaluation for programs identified;
 - c. Hold public hearings on existing programs associated with the three major policy areas of reintegration services, post-separation access to services, and retirement/senior care;



EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 08-08
PAGE THREE

- d. Develop a comprehensive list of recommendations;
- e. Prioritize the list of proposals into tiers for legislative and executive consideration; and
- f. Report written findings and recommendations to the Governor on or before December 31, 2008.

6. A quorum for Task Force meetings shall consist of a majority of the appointed members. The Task Force shall strive to operate by consensus; however, the Task Force may approve measures and make recommendations based on an affirmative vote of the majority of the quorum present.

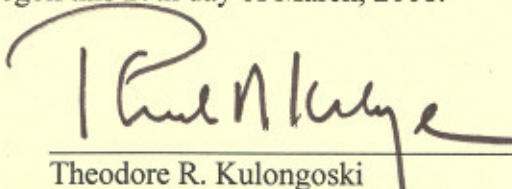
7. The Oregon Department of Veterans Affairs, the Oregon Department of Human Services, the Department of Administrative Services and the Governor's Legal Counsel shall provide staff support to the Task Force. All other state agencies shall provide assistance to the Task Force upon request.

8. Task Force members are not entitled to reimbursement of expenses or per diem provided in ORS 292.495.

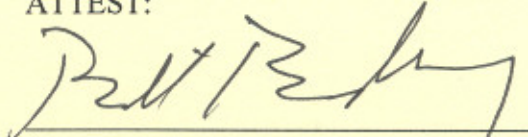
9. This Order shall remain in effect until December 31, 2008.

Done at Salem, Oregon this 27th day of March, 2008.




Theodore R. Kulongoski
GOVERNOR

ATTEST:


Bill Bradbury
SECRETARY OF STATE