



OREGON'S SENATOR JEFF MERKLEY

Coronavirus Resources: Veterans

Sen. Merkley, using his leadership position on the Senate Appropriations Committee, fought hard to make sure the \$2.2 trillion coronavirus relief funding stabilizes families, workers, small businesses, housing, education, agriculture, and health care. As these resources are distributed, Sen. Merkley's office will keep Oregonians up to date on what in the bill helps individuals and communities, and how to access the resources. He will continue to fight to make sure much-needed aid gets to the people who need it most.

Coronavirus relief to help veterans:

The bill makes a strong investment in serving veterans, providing \$19.6 billion to support veterans, including \$15.85 billion for the Veterans Administration (VA) to help treat COVID-19, purchase test kits, and procure personal protective equipment for clinicians. This aid includes:

- \$14.4 billion for the Veterans Health Administration, including to address impacts on health delivery;
- \$2.1 billion for care in the community, especially non-VA emergency room and urgent care;
- \$590 million in dedicated funding to treat vulnerable veterans, including homeless veterans and those in VA-run nursing homes;
- \$606 million for VA medical facilities;
- \$150 million for State Veterans Homes, like the Oregon Veterans' Home in Lebanon, Ore., that has been hit hard by the coronavirus crisis.

In addition to increased funding, state veterans' homes also benefit:

- The VA now has the authority to provide personal protective equipment and medical supplies to the state nursing homes, which is critical for Oregon, where one of the state's largest outbreaks to date has tragically been within a state veterans' home in Lebanon.
- Additionally, this bill suspends certain funding requirements, so that nursing homes can continue to receive their current VA funding, even when residents are transferred to acute care due to COVID-19.

The bill also provides for agreements with telecommunications companies to provide broadband for rural and otherwise isolated veterans to receive telehealth services.

For updates: Visit merkley.senate.gov/coronavirus for updates on these and other resources as the relief bills are implemented.