

REVENUE: No revenue impact

FISCAL: No fiscal impact

Action:	Do Pass and Be Placed on the Consent Calendar
Vote:	7 - 0 - 0
Yeas:	Cowan, Gelser, Gilliam, Kotek, Maurer, Olson, Tomei
Nays:	0
Exc.:	0
Prepared By:	Andy Smith, Administrator
Meeting Dates:	3/16

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES: Alters the definition of “low income customers” as it relates to eligibility for the Oregon Telephone Assistance Program (OTAP) to include residents of long term care facilities or residential care facilities who receive Medicaid and whose income does not exceed 135 percent of the federal poverty level.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Medicaid funding criteria
- History of legislation related to telephone services for low income residents
- Number of state residents served by OTAP
- Monthly costs of OTAP
- Number of additional individuals who would be eligible under measure

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT: No amendment.

BACKGROUND: Oregonians whose income is at or below the current federal poverty level and are on a state public assistance program may receive a reduction in their monthly bill for local residential telephone service through OTAP. OTAP is one of the three telecommunication assistance programs under The Residential Service Protection Fund, which was enacted during the 1987 legislative session to assure that adequate, affordable residential telecommunication service is available to all citizens of Oregon.

OTAP currently provides telephone subsidies to approximately 60,000 low-income Oregonians who receive food stamp benefits or benefits from low income public assistance programs for which eligibility requirements do not exceed 135 percent of federal poverty level. The program currently provides a maximum of \$13.50 per month for basic telephone service and the state pays \$3.50 per line for those who qualify and the Federal Communications Commission either waives the remaining cost or reimburses the telephone company.

3/20/2007 2:35:00 PM

This summary has not been adopted or officially endorsed by action of the committee.