

REVENUE: No revenue impact

FISCAL: Minimal fiscal impact, no statement issued

Action: Do Pass

Vote: 10 - 0 - 0

Yeas: Bailey, Bentz, Berger, Boone, Edwards D., Gilman, Kahl, Schaufler, Weidner, Beyer

Nays: 0

Exc.: 0

Prepared By: Patrick Brennan, Administrator

Meeting Dates: 2/18

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES: Raises maximum length of school buses from 40 feet to 45 feet. Declares an emergency and takes effect upon passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Safety improvements in new bus models, including improved access and egress
- Design changes has no negative effect on vehicle turn base
- No increase to maximum seating capacity of buses

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT: No amendment.

BACKGROUND: ORS 818.080 establishes the maximum size for vehicles on Oregon roadways. The maximum allowable length for single vehicles is 40 feet, while vehicle combinations are limited to 60 feet, and vehicle combinations utilizing a stinger-steered pole trailer are limited to 65 feet. However, ORS 818.100 provides several exceptions to the maximum allowable vehicle sizes. These exemptions include road maintenance vehicles, those operated by mass transit districts, and recreational vehicles.

School buses are currently subject to the 40-foot maximum length requirement. Recently, the Blue Bird Bus Company, which manufactures a significant percentage of all the school buses used in Oregon, determined that its newly designed large bus measures 40 feet, nine inches, meaning that under current law their large bus model could not be operated lawfully in Oregon. House Bill 2562 adds an exemption for school buses under ORS 818.100 and stipulates that school buses may not exceed 45 feet in length, consistent with the statutory maximum for recreational vehicles.