

REVENUE: No revenue impact

FISCAL: Fiscal statement issued

Action:	Do Pass
Vote:	8 - 0 - 0
Yeas:	Boone, Esquivel, Freeman, Komp, Matthews, Riley, Weidner, Cowan
Nays:	0
Exc.:	0
Prepared By:	David Molina, Administrator
Meeting Dates:	5/21

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES: Allows volunteer health practitioners licensed in other states, and registered with the volunteer health practitioner registration system, to practice in Oregon during an emergency. Facilitates the creation of registry of out-of-state health care providers.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Liability concerns
- Challenges to current statute
- The need to establish legal guidelines for recognizing other states' licenses
- The need to streamline verification of professional competency and expediently deploy medical volunteers in the event of state emergency or crisis
- Support from the Department of Human Services, emergency management and public safety organizations

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT: No amendment.

BACKGROUND: On August 28th, 2005, Hurricane Katrina hit the southern coast of the United States with devastating effect. Following Katrina, the National Conference of Commissioners on Uniform State Laws passed *The Uniform Emergency Volunteer Health Practitioners Act* to remedy significant deficiencies in interstate and intrastate procedures used to authorize and regulate the deployment of public and private sector health practitioners to augment the resources provided by state and local government employees and other first-responders. The Commission's assessment asserts that many citizens were injured or died because volunteer health practitioners from assisting states were unable to respond quickly because they were hindered by licensing and registration problems.

Proponents of the measure assert the need to prepare in advance of a tsunami-generating earthquake. Most visible is the Cascadia Subduction Zone, a 680-mile fault that runs 50 miles off the coast of the Pacific Northwest, from Cape Mendocino in California to Vancouver Island in southern British Columbia. The geological scientific community asserts that the India plate subducted beneath the Burma microplate rupture is the same length as the Cascadia Subduction Zone.

Currently, Oregon maintains the SERV-OR statewide registry system to help pre-credentialed health care professionals (physicians, nurses, behavioral health providers, and others) volunteer their services during emergencies with significant health impacts. Sponsored by the Oregon Public Health Division in partnership with the Medical Reserve Corps, SERV-OR utilizes a secure database to register, credential, and alert volunteer health providers.

Nine other states have adopted similar legislation: Arkansas, Colorado, Indiana, Kentucky, New Mexico, North Dakota, Tennessee, Oklahoma and Utah. In addition to Oregon, eight states and a district have introduced legislation in the 2009 session: Connecticut, District of Columbia, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi, New Hampshire, Texas and Washington. Proponents of Senate Bill 8-A assert the need to streamline verification of professional competency and expediently deploy medical volunteers in the event of state emergency or crisis.

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