

REVENUE: No revenue impact

FISCAL: No fiscal impact

Action: Do Pass
Vote: 3 - 1 - 1
Yeas: Morrisette, Morse, Monnes Anderson
Nays: Kruse
Exc.: Bates
Prepared By: Robert Shook, Administrator
Meeting Dates: 4/7, 4/14, 4/16

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES: Requires certain health insurers to cover the cost of tobacco use cessation programs.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Maximum annual benefit is \$500 per subscriber
- Treatment options include medication and/or counseling
- Oregon Medicaid program began coverage in 1998
- Six states require insurers to support tobacco use cessation program

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT: No amendment.

BACKGROUND: Smoking is the leading preventable cause of death in the United States. Smokers who quit will, on average, live longer and have fewer years living with a disability. About 23 percent of American adults and 28 percent of teens smoke. Smoking is costly to employers both in terms of smoking-related medical expenses and lost productivity. Tobacco use cessation treatments are the single most cost-effective health insurance benefit for adults that can be provided.

Smoking cessation treatments have been found to be safe and effective. Options include counseling, medications, or a combination of both. Face-to-face counseling and interactive telephone counseling are proven to be more effective than services that only provide education or self-help materials. The Food and Drug Administration has approved six first-line medications to help smokers quit. Five are nicotine replacement therapies, and the sixth is a non-nicotine medication.

Senate Bill 734 requires health insurers to provide payment, coverage, or reimbursement of at least \$500 for a tobacco use cessation program for a person enrolled in the plan who is 15 years of age or older. The term "cessation program" means a program recommended by a physician that follows the United States Public Health Service guidelines, which include both education and medical treatment components designed to assist a person in ceasing the use of tobacco products.