

2009 Regular Legislative Session
FISCAL ANALYSIS OF PROPOSED LEGISLATION
Prepared by the Oregon Legislative Fiscal Office

MEASURE NUMBER: HB 2544 **STATUS:** A-Engrossed
SUBJECT: Establishing the Oregon Environmental Literacy Task Force
GOVERNMENT UNIT AFFECTED: Oregon Department of Education
PREPARED BY: Erica Kleiner, Kim To
REVIEWED BY: Monica Brown
DATE: March 9, 2009

	<u>2009-2011</u>	<u>2011-2013</u>
EXPENDITURES:		
General Fund Appropriation	\$10,000	-0-

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2009

GOVERNOR’S BUDGET: This bill is not anticipated by the Governor’s recommended budget.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT MANDATE: This bill does not affect local governments' service levels or shared revenues sufficient to trigger Section 15, Article XI of the Oregon Constitution.

ANALYSIS: House Bill 2544 as adopted establishes a ten-member Oregon Environmental Literacy Task Force charged with developing an environmental literacy plan to integrate environmental education into the academic curriculum. Members would represent educators, public employees from natural resources agencies, and an association. A report from the task force is due to the Legislative Assembly no later than October 1, 2010, and the task force is repealed on the convening of the next regular biennial legislative session. House Bill 2544 includes a preamble consisting of explanatory clauses to explain the need for this legislation. HB 2544 allows ODE to accept certain contributions of moneys and assistance. The Task Force is directed to (a) identify the meanings of key terms required for developing the plan and (b) seek input on the plan from a diverse group of sources.

The bill includes a \$10,000 General Fund appropriation to the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) to provide staffing, administrative support, and reimbursements of allowable travel expenses to the task force. Based on recent experience with new advisory bodies, ODE assumes that the task force would meet in Salem nine times over the course of eleven months. In addition to representatives from ODE, a school district, an educational service district the Oregon University Systems, and a local park and recreation association the task force will also include the directors or designees of the Department of Environmental Quality, the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, Oregon Parks and Recreation Department, Oregon Department of State Lands. These members are not entitled to compensation but are entitled to reimbursements for allowable travel expenses. The bill directs these claims for expenses to be paid out of funds appropriated to ODE for purposes of the task force. ODE and the affected agency anticipate these claims to be minimal. Assuming these limited claims and this limited schedule, ODE calculates incidental costs such as meeting costs, allowable reimbursements for task force members, photocopies and production of the final report to be approximately \$2,000.

Current ODE staff would be assigned to support the task force. ODE estimates the impact on staffing to be a workload equivalent of one Education Specialist at 0.30 FTE, and one Office Specialist at 0.20 FTE. ODE values this staff time at approximately \$34,200. The Legislative Fiscal Office (LFO) notes that ODE would not need to hire additional staff to support this task force, only to re-prioritize duties and responsibilities of existing staff. The \$34,200 equivalent serves as an estimate of possible incremental staffing cost if ODE needs to hire additional staff in the event that re-prioritization of duties and responsibilities of existing staff were not feasible during the functional life of the task force or if the

cumulative effect of workload from the enactment of other bills exceeds levels assumed in the ODE budget. LFO notes that other bills are pending before this Legislative Assembly that also would require an expenditure of ODE staff time.