

REVENUE: No revenue impact

FISCAL: No fiscal impact

Action:	Do Pass
Vote:	7 - 0 - 1
Yeas:	Cameron, Conger, Matthews, Sheehan, Smith J., Holvey, Whisnant
Nays:	0
Exc.:	Clem
Prepared By:	Jan Nordlund, Administrator
Meeting Dates:	2/3

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES: Authorizes the Oregon Employment Department (OED) to disclose employment-related information to the Department of Human Services (DHS) and the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) to be used in the collection of debts. Prohibits DHS and OHA from disclosing the information to private collection agency.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- OED is authorized to share data with DHS for overpayment writing, but not for overpayment recovery
- Examples of programs that would use the data for collection purposes include food stamps, Temporary Aid to Needy Families (TANF), Oregon Health Plan, employment-related day care
- OED data is currently used by DHS for determining program eligibility

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT: No amendment.

BACKGROUND: Under current law, the OED is allowed to disclose information to specified entities for specified purposes, including the collection of debts by the Department of Transportation. Within DHS, the Overpayment Writing Unit is currently authorized to access OED data, but the Overpayment Recovery Unit is not. While the recovery specialists use alternative sources, the OED data is more timely, complete, and accurate.

Earlier legislation authorized data sharing, but the U.S. Department of Labor, which oversees the administration of Oregon's unemployment insurance program, requires a specific authorization in state law to allow the disclosure.

Allowing the disclosure of information to DHS and OHA will allow those agencies to recover debts. The disclosure will also allow DHS to comply with Federal regulations which state that DHS "should use...employment insurance files" to locate individuals who have "outstanding overpayments" in the Temporary Aid to Needy Families program.