

**REVENUE:** No revenue impact

**FISCAL:** No fiscal impact

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<b>Action:</b>	Do Pass
<b>Vote:</b>	7 - 0 - 1
<b>Yeas:</b>	Barnhart, Berger, Freeman, Holvey, Wingard, Hunt, Olson
<b>Nays:</b>	0
<b>Exc.:</b>	Garrett
<b>Prepared By:</b>	Jim Stenbridge, Administrator and Victoria Cox, Committee Staff
<b>Meeting Dates:</b>	6/2

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**WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:** Defines school types for purpose of federal loan forgiveness programs offered to teachers. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

**ISSUES DISCUSSED:**

- Elements of Teacher Loan Forgiveness Program
- Relevance of state definition of secondary school
- Inclusion of grade six through grade eight teachers regardless of school type
- Incentive for highly qualified teachers to work in low-income schools
- Cost of higher education and prevalence of student debt upon graduation

**EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT:** No amendment.

**BACKGROUND:** The federal Teacher Loan Forgiveness Program is intended to encourage individuals to enter and continue in the teaching profession. Under the program, individuals who teach full time for five consecutive academic years in elementary and secondary schools that serve low-income families and meet other qualifications may be eligible for forgiveness of some of the principal and interest on their education loans.

Oregon middle school teachers who applied for Teacher Loan Forgiveness have been denied the increased secondary school amounts because the federal program does not recognize middle schools as secondary schools. Senate Bill 670, for the purpose of federal loan forgiveness, classifies a secondary school as one that offers instructions in grades 6 through 12 or kindergarten through 12, if the teacher is employed to teach any grade from grade 6 through 12. The act allows Oregon teachers who teach middle school, and are otherwise qualified, to be eligible for federal Teacher Loan Forgiveness Program.