

**PRELIMINARY STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY****CARRIER:**

Senate Committee on Senate Health Care

**REVENUE: No revenue impact****FISCAL: May have fiscal impact, statement not yet issued****Action:****Vote:****Yeas:****Nays:****Exc.:****Prepared By:** Zena Rockowitz, Administrator**Meeting Dates:** 3/16

**WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:** Repeals 2018 sunset on Oregon Health Authority's (OHA) approval of dental pilot projects intended to encourage innovative practices in oral health care delivery, with a focus on highest disease rates and least access to dental care.

**ISSUES DISCUSSED:****EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT:**

**BACKGROUND:** Oral health is vital for sustaining overall health, getting good nutrition, and communicating with others. It is an indicator of overall health and a preventative measure. Oral disease often brings disabling pain which can worsen heart and respiratory conditions and auto-immune diseases. One study in Oregon found that dental pain is a more frequent cause of emergency room visits than headache, fever, and asthma. Racial, economic, and geographic factors influence access to timely prevention and treatment.

The Oregon Health Authority (OHA) conducted a survey in 2012 of school aged children's oral health. Results show that oral disease disparities exist for school-age children. Children from lower-income households had higher cavity rates compared to children from higher-income households (63% vs. 38%), almost twice the rate of untreated tooth decay (25% vs. 13%) and more than twice the rate of rampant tooth decay (19% vs. 8%). In addition, about 24,000 children ages 6 to 9 were in need of early or urgent dental care. Up to 3,800 children in 1st to 3rd grades in Oregon reported dental pain or infection on any given day.

The most recent survey available reviewing oral health care for adults by Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found that two thirds of Oregon adults visit the dentist at least once per year. It also found that 33 percent of Oregonians ages 33 to 44 have all their teeth, and although regular dental visits are particularly important for people with diabetes, 30 percent of Oregonians with diabetes had no dental visit in the past year.

The OHA approves dental pilot projects that intend to innovate practices in oral health care delivery particularly in areas of high disease rate and low access to dental care. The pilot projects operate for three to five years and evaluate factors such as quality of care and access. Projects should achieve teaching new skills to dental personnel, developing new categories of dental personnel, and accelerating training of personnel. The programs end in 2018.

3/10/2015 2:15:00 PM \*

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