

PRELIMINARY STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY**CARRIER:**

Senate Committee on Workforce

REVENUE: May have revenue impact, statement not yet issued**FISCAL: May have fiscal impact, statement not yet issued****SUBSEQUENT REFERRAL TO:****Action:****Vote:****Yeas:****Nays:****Exc.:****Prepared By:** Matthew Germer, Administrator**Meeting Dates:** 4/6, 4/8, 4/20

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES: Imposes a penalty by Oregon Employment Department on large employers whose employees receive health insurance coverage through medical assistance program. Appropriates penalties to Oregon Health Authority for certain purposes. Provides remedy for employees subject to retaliation for applying for or receiving medical assistance or premium tax credits. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Cost of health insurance coverage
- Relationship between low wages and social service programs
- Role of employers in health care system
- Which employers would be covered
- Regulations around asking employees if they are covered by the Oregon Health Plan
- Interaction between wages and benefits
- Definition of covered employee

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT:

(-1) Changes employer size threshold to 250 employees. Amends definitions of relevant terms. Recalibrates employer fee formula. Creates grace period for certain provisions of the measure.

BACKGROUND: Under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA), employers of 50 or more workers must provide health insurance for their full-time employees. Accordingly, many workers are not offered health insurance by their employer and must obtain it through medical assistance programs or through a health insurance exchange. In Oregon, many low-wage workers who are not offered health insurance by their employers obtain their health insurance through the Oregon Health Plan.

Senate Bill 845 imposes a penalty on large employers whose employees receive health insurance coverage through the Oregon Health Plan and appropriates the penalties to the Oregon Health Authority for certain purposes. The measure also provides a remedy for employees who experience retaliation for applying for or receiving medical assistance or premium tax credits under the ACA.

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

Committee Services Form – 2015 Regular Session