

PRELIMINARY STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY**CARRIER:**

Senate Committee on Education

REVENUE: No revenue impact**FISCAL: Fiscal statement issued****Action:****Vote:****Yeas:****Nays:****Exc.:****Prepared By:** Gretchen Engbring, Administrator**Meeting Dates:** 5/19, 5/26

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES: Effective July 1, 2021, prohibits school district that provides breakfast or lunch at school site from using polystyrene foam plates, trays, food containers or food packaging. Allows school district to use polystyrene foam in meal service if district participates in recycling program for foam. Directs Oregon Department of Education (ODE) to provide extension for school district able to show financial hardship experienced from complying with prohibition on use of polystyrene materials. Directs school district using polystyrene in meal service during 2014-2015 school year to establish plan to comply with measure. Declares emergency, effective July 1, 2015.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Health threats posed by eating or drinking hot or acidic foods from polystyrene containers
- Polystyrene as a non-biodegradable material that contributes to litter, landfills, and marine debris
- Impacts of polystyrene on wildlife, who may eat the material and get sick or starve
- Lack of alternatives for students who are eating school meals served on polystyrene trays or other packaging
- Potential alternatives that are biodegradable, recyclable, and healthier, such as cardboard
- Cost differential between polystyrene and other options
- Decreasing costs of alternatives as use increases

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT:

BACKGROUND: Polystyrene is a thermoplastic material made from petroleum-derived styrene. Polystyrene can be made into both foam and rigid products. It is one of the most common types of plastic and is used to produce disposable plastic cutlery and dinnerware, as well as products used to keep hot and cold foods at desired temperatures.

House Bill 2762-A would prohibit a school district from providing meals using polystyrene foam plates, trays, containers or packaging after July 1, 2021. The measure allows the use of such materials if the district participates in a foam recycling program and also directs ODE to allow an extension for districts able to show a financial hardship from compliance with the prohibition.