

PRELIMINARY STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Joint Committee On Ways and Means

Fiscal: Fiscal impact issued

Revenue: No Revenue Impact

Action Date:

Action:

Meeting Dates:

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WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Requires the Department of Consumer and Business Services (DCBS) to develop recommendations for the creation of a premium assistance program for low-income Compact of Free Association (COFA) islanders to enable COFA residents of Oregon to purchase health benefit plans through the health insurance exchange. Directs DCBS to convene an advisory group to advise the department in developing these recommendations. Requires DCBS to report its recommendations to the Legislature by September 15, 2016. Sunsets on January 2, 2018. Takes effect on passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Proposed amendment.
- Minimal Fiscal Impact

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT:

Replaces the bill.

BACKGROUND:

After World War II, the United States assumed administration of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. The Trust controlled the development of the island economies and international relations. In 1986, the island nations under the Trust Territory were given the option of choosing between becoming a commonwealth of the U.S. or independent nations with special agreements with the U.S. Three Island territories chose independence, and that independence came attached with a unique treaty, known as "Compact of Free Association." COFA agreements were made between the U.S. and The Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Republic of Palau, and the Federated States of Micronesia.

The Compact agreements allow the citizens from each of these nations to freely migrate, without work permits or visas, to study, live and work in the U.S. It also allows the U.S. to have a military presence in the COFA islands in perpetuity.