

Seventy-Eighth Oregon Legislative Assembly - 2015 Regular Session
STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY
House Committee On Education

MEASURE: HB 2479

Fiscal: Fiscal impact issued

Revenue: No Revenue Impact

Action Date: 03/09/15

Action: Do Pass. Refer To Ways And Means.

Meeting Dates: 02/18, 03/09

Vote:

Yeas: 9 - Barreto, Doherty, Frederick, Hack, McLain, Piluso, Reardon, Sprenger, Wilson

Prepared By: Richard Donovan, Committee Administrator

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Requires Trustees of State Library to provide annual grants for public library services for youth, with emphasis on underserved youth. Authorizes trustees to request that appropriations for grant funding by Legislative Assembly be based on methods determined by trustees. Increases minimum grant amount. Expands uses of annual establishment and development grants to include programs for students in kindergarten through high school. Replaces current name for State Library's reading program with generic name in list of programs eligible for Oregon Early Reading Program strategic investment moneys. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- History of program, including 2013-14 task force process
- Value of program, particularly to traditionally underserved communities
- Concern with potential fragmentation of policies, and related potential to detract from effectiveness if no comprehensive strategy is enacted
- Need for further fiscal analysis in Ways and Means committee

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

The Ready to Read Grant Program (Program) funds public library services for youth, from birth through 14 years of age, and was established in its current form in 1993. House Bill 2116 (2007) updated the program to increase access to early learning and summer enrichment opportunities by previously underserved students.

House Bill 2479 addresses concerns that the Program no longer allows libraries the sufficient flexibility to work effectively due to a variety of reasons, including: a recent decrease in certified library media specialists at schools; changes in Oregon's education landscape, including the Common Core State Standards, Early Learning Hubs, and the 40-40-20 Goal; and, research demonstrating the value of out-of-school-time to address lagging student achievement.