

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

MEASURE: HB 2931 A

Fiscal: Fiscal impact issued
Revenue: Revenue impact issued

Action Date: 03/16/15

Action: Do Pass As Amended, Be Printed Engrossed, And Bill Be Referred To Ways
And Means.

Meeting Dates: 03/06, 03/16

Vote:
Yeas: 9 - Buehler, Clem, Greenlick, Hayden, Kennemer, Keny-Guyer, Lively, Nosse, Weidner

Prepared By: Sandy Thiele-Cirka, Committee Administrator

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Requires Oregon Health Authority (OHA) to disseminate to each school district information relating to elevated radon levels. Specifies types of information to be included. Directs each school district to develop a plan for schools where the radon levels are elevated. Specifies criteria for the plans. Directs school district to submit the plan to OHA on or before September 1, 2016. Exempts any school that has been tested for radon on or after January 1, 2006. Appropriates General Fund moneys to OHA and Department of Education for purposes related to the Act. Declares an emergency, effective on passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Health problems and conditions associated with radon exposure
- Current Environmental Protection Agency testing recommendations
- School districts' education and testing efforts
- Importance of having unified plans
- Student and teacher health concerns
- Proposed amendment

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT:

Exempts any school that has been tested for radon on or after January 1, 2006.

BACKGROUND:

Radon is a cancer-causing radioactive gas. It cannot be seen, there is no smell nor can it be tasted. The Surgeon General has warned that radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer in the United States. Some scientific studies of radon exposure indicate that children may be more sensitive to radon. This may be due to their higher respiration rate and their rapidly dividing cells, which may be more vulnerable to radiation damage. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Surgeon General's Office have estimated that as many as 20,000 lung cancer deaths are caused each year by radon. Radon-induced lung cancer costs the United States over \$2 billion per year in both direct and indirect health care costs.