

STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Human Services and Early Childhood

Fiscal: Fiscal impact issued

Revenue: No Revenue Impact

Action Date: 04/07/15

Action: Do Pass With Amendments. (Printed A-Eng.)

Meeting Dates: 03/05, 03/31, 04/07

Vote:

Yeas: 5 - Dembrow, Gelser, Kruse, Monnes Anderson, Olsen

Prepared By: Cheyenne Ross, Committee Administrator

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Transfers administration and funding structure for elderly rental assistance program from Department of Revenue to Oregon Housing and Community Services (OHCS). Prescribes operative dates. Takes effect 91st day after *sine die*.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Reason for transferring administration of program
- Appropriateness of OHCS as administering agency: within its mission, existing service delivery and area of program oversight
- Financial assistance never indexed, so currently only available to those in extreme poverty
- Long transition timeline
- Consideration of other alternatives

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT:

Aligns dates and removes space for appropriation.

BACKGROUND:

Senate Bill 296 is the result of work group activity led by Oregon Housing and Community Services (OHCS) and the Department of Revenue (DOR), including the Oregon Law Center and Community Action Partnership. The elderly rental assistance program provides annual rental assistance to low-income seniors, if certain criteria are met, and is only available if the place being rented is subject to property taxes. The property taxes requirement is the only connection the program has to DOR; DOR issues payments, but has no oversight or other resources. The more natural connection for program administration is OHCS because it provides other supports for, and is generally more accessible to, older and low-income adults. The ultimate goal of transferring the program from DOR to OHCS, is to transform it into a more effective and useful tool for those who qualify, and to take advantage of any opportunity there may be to connect low-income seniors to other services.

Senate Bill 296-A transfers administration of the elderly rental assistance program from DOR to OHCS.