

STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

CARRIER: Sen. Boquist

Senate Committee On Rules

**Fiscal:** Has minimal fiscal impact

**Revenue:** No Revenue Impact

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**Action Date:** 05/12/15

**Action:** Do Pass With Amendments To The A-Eng Bill. (Printed B-Eng.)

**Meeting Dates:** 04/30, 05/12

**Vote:**

Yeas: 4 - Beyer, Boquist, Burdick, Rosenbaum

Exc: 1 - Ferrioli

**Prepared By:** Erin Seiler, Committee Administrator

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**WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:**

Requires Legislative Assembly to hold public hearings throughout state prior to proposing congressional or legislative reapportionment plan. Requires Legislative Assembly or Secretary of State, to extent practicable, to hold five public hearings after reapportionment plan is proposed but before plan is adopted. Requires hearings to be held either throughout state or with use of videoconferencing technologies.

**ISSUES DISCUSSED:**

- Importance of geographic diversity of public hearings
- Lack of clarity over requirement for at least 10 public hearings, if Secretary of State is required to complete redistricting
- Importance of public input in redistricting process
- Previous redistricting processes
- Codifying best practices from 2011 redistricting process

**EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT:**

Removes Secretary of State from requirement for at least 10 public hearings prior to proposing legislative or congressional redistricting plan. Requires that of, at least, 10 public hearings prior to proposing legislative or congressional redistricting plan, one hearing is held in each of the congressional districts and to extent practicable, one hearing is held in each of the congressional districts after plan is proposed.

**BACKGROUND:**

Every ten years, the Legislative Assembly must redraw legislative and congressional district lines based on new U.S. Census data.

ORS 188.010 establishes criteria to guide the Legislative Assembly when redrawing district boundaries. According to this statute, each district, as nearly practicable, should: be contiguous; be of equal population; utilize existing geographic or political boundaries; not divide communities of common interest; and be connected by transportation links. The criteria further state that: 1) no district shall be drawn for the purpose of favoring any political party, incumbent legislator or other person; 2) no district shall be drawn for the purpose of diluting the voting strength of any language or ethnic minority group; and 3) two state House of Representative districts shall be wholly included within each single state senatorial district.

Currently, there is no statutory requirement specifying how the Oregon Legislative Assembly collects information regarding how to address changes in population in Oregon's legislative and congressional districts. During the 2011 legislative redistricting process, the members of the House and Senate Committees on Redistricting conducted 13 informational hearings around the state, allowing participation, in person or via video conference, from citizens in all of Oregon's 36 counties. In

addition, the committees conducted three informational hearings on proposed legislative and congressional redistricting plans, at the Capitol in Salem. The Oregon Legislative Assembly adopted and the governor signed the legislative redistricting plan on June 13, 2011 and a congressional redistricting plan on June 30, 2011.

House Bill 2974-B requires the Legislative Assembly to hold at least 10 public hearings prior to proposing a legislative or congressional redistricting plan and to the extent practicable, and for the Legislative Assembly or Secretary of State to conduct at least five public hearings after a redistricting plan is proposed with use of video conference or throughout state. The measure sets forth criteria for where public hearings are to be located in Oregon.