Seventy-Eighth Oregon Legislative Assembly - 2015 Regular Session **MEASURE: SB 921**

STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY **CARRIER: Rep. Parrish**
Rep. Lininger

House Committee On Transportation and Economic Development

Fiscal: No Fiscal Impact
Revenue: No Revenue Impact

Action Date: 05/13/15
Action: Do Pass.
Meeting Dates: 04/29, 05/13
Vote:
Yeas: 4 - Bentz, Davis, Lively, McLain
Exc: 3 - Gorsek, Hack, McKeown
Prepared By: Patrick Brennan, Committee Administrator

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:
Directs Department of Transportation to make efforts to complete installation of median barriers between opposing lanes of travel on interstate highways where distance between lanes is 100 feet or less, except in segments designated for emergency access or when Department determines that such a barrier may create a safety or operational hazard.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Instances of fatal accidents due to vehicles crossing median into oncoming traffic
- Accelerating work already planned

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT:
No amendment.

BACKGROUND:
In the last ten years there have been twenty crashes along Interstate 5 (I-5) in Salem that involved vehicles crossing the center median into oncoming traffic. In September 2014, Steven Fritz and Cary Marie Fairchild were killed in a head-on collision on Interstate 5 near Salem.

A February 2000 ODOT report states that the three-cable barrier installed along I-5 between Salem and Wilsonville has resulted in a decrease in both crossover crash fatalities and crash-related costs. Nine miles of cable were installed in December 1996 and another 12.9 miles in April 1998. The 2000 report showed that in the 1.7 years following installation of the twenty miles of cable barrier, there were zero crossover crashes. According to data from the National Safety Council, crash-related costs to the public have dropped from $600,000 per year to $200,000 per year on the initial nine-mile section, when comparing crashes before and after installation of the cable median barrier.

The cost per kilometer of the three-cable barrier was estimated to be $26,357, compared to an estimated cost of $93,504 per kilometer for an alternative concrete barrier. Considering installation, maintenance and repair costs, the cable median barrier would save $1,260 per kilometer per year over the concrete barrier, based on a thirty-year annual cost analysis, the report stated.

This summary has not been adopted or officially endorsed by action of the Committee.