

STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Health Care

Fiscal: No Fiscal Impact

Revenue: No Revenue Impact

Action Date: 05/20/15

Action: Do Pass.

Meeting Dates: 05/20

Vote:

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

Prepared By: Sandy Thiele-Cirka, Committee Administrator

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Directs Oregon Health Authority (OHA) to appoint state dental director to oversee programs operated by OHA that increase access to oral health services. Requires dental director to study and make recommendations on improving oral health.

Declares an emergency, effective on passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Role of dental director
- Evidence-based approach to oral health
- Hiring of Dental Director in February 2015
- Benefits of having a Director

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

Oral health is vital for sustaining overall health, getting good nutrition and communicating with others. Oral disease often brings disabling pain which can worsen heart and respiratory conditions and auto-immune diseases. One study in Oregon found that dental pain is a more frequent cause of emergency room visits than headache, fever and asthma. Racial, economic and geographic factors influence access to timely dental care prevention and dental treatment.

The *2014-2020 Strategic Plan for Oral Health in Oregon* recommends implementing the most potent and cost-effective strategies to improve oral health, while reducing disparities in access and quality. Key recommendations included creating a dental director position to establish clinical, fiscal and policy priorities for oral disease prevention and care.