

PRELIMINARY STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY**CARRIER:**

Senate Committee on Business and Transportation

REVENUE: May have revenue impact, statement not yet issued**FISCAL: May have fiscal impact, statement not yet issued****SUBSEQUENT REFERRAL TO:****Action:****Vote:****Yeas:****Nays:****Exc.:****Prepared By:** Patrick Brennan, Administrator**Meeting Dates:** 2/1

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES: Authorizes the Office of Small Business Assistance, as part of its duties, to coordinate with, and provide assistance to, county and municipal agencies and authorities. Authorizes the office to refer small businesses to the appropriate resources to answer questions posed by the small business. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:**EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT:** No amendment.

BACKGROUND: The Secretary of State is a statewide official whose duties include registering businesses operating in Oregon and conducting audits. In addition to the audit function, the Office of Secretary of State conducts special investigations regarding the potential misuse of state resources; these investigations may occur at state agencies, local governments, or contractors receiving state or federal funds from state agencies. The Secretary of State's Audits Division also accepts reports of waste, fraud or abuse by phone, Internet or mail.

The Office of Small Business Assistance was created within the Office of Secretary of State with the passage of House Bill 3459 (2013). It was charged with two primary functions: to facilitate interactions between small businesses and state agencies; and to conduct reviews and investigations of complaints received from small businesses with respect to interactions with state agencies. "Small business" is defined for this program as a prospective, new or established business with 100 or fewer employees that is, or will be, located in Oregon.

Senate Bill 1583 expands the duties of the Office of Small Business Assistance to include coordination with, and assistance to, county and municipal governments and authorities. The measure specifies that with regard to reviews and investigations, the Office shall consult and coordinate with the ombudsman or similar office of the county or municipality in question.