

## **HB 2716 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY**

### **House Committee On Agriculture and Natural Resources**

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**Prepared By:** Misty Freeman, LPRO Analyst

**Meeting Dates:** 3/7

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#### **WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:**

Requires all persons age 12 years and under wear properly secured helmet when aboard boat in waters rated class II or higher on commonly accepted scale of river difficulty. Requires outfitter or guide to provide helmet to all persons over 12 years when aboard boat in waters rated class II or higher on scale of river difficulty. Applies to conduct occurring on or after effective date of Act.

#### **ISSUES DISCUSSED:**

#### **EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:**

#### **BACKGROUND:**

The Safety Code of American Whitewater (Code) rates rivers using the International Scale of River Difficulty. A river rating takes into account many factors including the difficulty of individual rapids, remoteness and hazards. The six classes of waters as described by the Code are:

- Class I Rapids: Fast moving water with riffles and small waves. Few obstructions, all obvious and easily missed with little training.
- Class II Rapids (Novice): Straightforward rapids with wide, clear channels which are evident without scouting. Occasional maneuvering may be required, but rocks and medium-sized waves are easily missed by trained paddlers.
- Class III Rapids (Intermediate): Rapids with moderate, irregular waves which may be difficult to avoid and which can swamp an open canoe. Complex maneuvers in fast current and good boat control in tight passages or around ledges are often required; large waves or strainers may be present but are easily avoided.
- Class IV Rapids (Advanced): Intense, powerful but predictable rapids requiring precise boat handling in turbulent water. Depending on the character of the river, it may feature large, unavoidable waves and holes or constricted passages demanding fast maneuvers under pressure.
- Class V Rapids (Expert): Extremely long, obstructed, or very violent rapids which expose a paddler to added risk. Drops may contain large, unavoidable waves and holes or steep, congested chutes with complex, demanding routes. Rapids may continue for long distances between pools, demanding a high level of fitness.
- Class VI Rapids (Extreme and Exploratory Rapids): These runs have almost never been attempted and often exemplify the extremes of difficulty, unpredictability and danger. The consequences of errors are very severe and rescue may be impossible. For teams of experts only, at favorable water levels, after close personal inspection and taking all precautions.

Currently, Oregon law requires outfitters and guides to provide passengers with rescue equipment and a life vest on waters rated Class III or higher, as described by the Code as waters of "intermediate" difficulty. House Bill 2716 would require outfitters and guides to provide helmets to all persons aboard a boat on Class II or higher waters, and would require persons age 12 years and younger to wear a properly secured helmet.