

HB 2472 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Judiciary

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Sub-Referral To: Joint Committee On Ways and Means

Meeting Dates: 3/30, 4/12, 4/13

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Requires State Medical Examiner to assume all county medical examiner duties starting in 2021. Creates transition process. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

Fiscal Impact

No Revenue Impact

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

Creating uniform system across state

Providing deputy medical examiners sufficient training and oversight

Potential cost of legislation

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

BACKGROUND:

In Oregon, suspicious death investigations are supervised by the Medical Examiner Division of the Oregon State Police. The Division currently employs six medical examiners and one forensic anthropologist. Because of the limited staffing, most counties employ deputy medical examiners who can perform the initial response and investigation. These positions are often filled by local sheriff's deputies, and some small and rural counties struggle to adequately fund and maintain these position. There are also concerns that deputy medical examiners often lack adequate training and supervision because of the State Medical Examiner's limited resources and staff.

House Bill 2472 requires the State Medical Examiner to assume responsibilities for all deaths requiring an investigation by July 2021. In the meantime, the State Medical Examine is required to establish regions for the state and determine whether the state should assume examiner duties for each of those regions prior to the 2021 deadline.