

HB 3160 -A2 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Human Services

Prepared By: Matt Doumit, LPRO Analyst

Meeting Dates: 4/26, 5/1

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Permits individual with limited vision to carry and use a white cane on highways and other public places. Defines “limited vision.” Modifies definition of “blind.”

FISCAL: Minimal Expenditure Impact

REVENUE: No Revenue Impact

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Current laws regarding white canes, and need for update to accommodate aging population
- Provisions of measure
- Suggested amendment to add emergency clause so measure can take effect immediately

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

-A2 Adds emergency clause.

FISCAL: Minimal Expenditure Impact

REVENUE: No Revenue Impact

BACKGROUND:

Oregon law allows individuals who are blind or blind and deaf to carry and use a “white cane” for mobility when crossing highways and other public places. The white cane signals to drivers that the carrier is blind, and failure to stop and wait for a pedestrian with a white cane to cross a motorway is a traffic violation. It is also a traffic violation for a person who is not blind to carry and use a white cane. A “blind” person is one who has 20/200 vision or less or has a visual field of 20 degrees or less. According to the American Optometric Association, 20/200 vision means the individual must be as close as 20 feet to see what a person with normal vision can see at 200 feet.

House Bill 3160-A allows an individual who has “limited vision” to carry and use a white cane on highways and other public places. It exempts those with limited vision from offenses for unlawful use of white cane. The measure defines “limited vision” as a visual acuity not exceeding 20/70 and is no worse than 20/200 in the better eye with corrective lenses. The measure also modifies the definition of “blind” to include a visual acuity not exceeding 20/200 in the better eye with corrective lenses.