

SB 643 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Environment and Natural Resources

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Meeting Dates: 2/23

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Requires persons 17 years of age and younger who are either operating a boat or are a passenger in a boat, on any section of water rated Class III or higher, to wear a properly secured helmet. Requires helmet to be a type prescribed by rules adopted by the Marine Board. Adds improper or insufficient helmet to list of especially hazardous conditions that authorize a peace officer to order a boat operator to take immediate and reasonable steps to remedy. Applies to conduct occurring on or after effective date of Act.

REVENUE: May have revenue impact, but no statement yet issued

FISCAL: May have fiscal impact, but no statement yet issued

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

Rivers and river segments are rated using roman numerals I to VI according to an International Scale of River Difficulty. Class III waters are described, in part, as having "rapids with moderate, irregular waves which may be difficult to avoid and which can swamp an open canoe." (American Whitewater) ORS 830.215 requires a person operating a boat on any section of water rated Class III or higher, and all passengers in the boat, to wear a properly secured personal floatation device. ORS 704.070 requires an outfitter and guide operating a non-motorized boat carrying passengers on waters rated as Class III or higher, and all passengers in the boat, to wear personal floatation devices.

Senate Bill 643 would require anyone 17 years of age or younger in a boat on waters rated as Class III or higher to wear a properly secured helmet.