

SB 944 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Human Services

Action Date: 04/17/17

Action: Without recommendation as to passage, but with amendments and requesting referral to Ways and Means. (Printed A-Eng.)

Vote: 3-2-0-0

Yeas: 3 - Dembrow, Gelser, Knopp

Nays: 2 - Monnes Anderson, Olsen

Fiscal: Fiscal impact issued

Revenue: No revenue impact

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WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Establishes Youth Acute Behavioral Health Leadership Council (Council) to develop proposal for centralized coordination of youth behavioral health services and report to Legislative Assembly by October 1, 2018. Requires Governor to appoint Behavioral Health Policy Advisor to coordinate state behavioral health services. Directs Oregon Health Authority (OHA) to contract for 24-hour call center related to placement of youth needing high acuity behavioral health services. Sunsets January 2, 2021. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Provisions of amendment
- Misalignment of services and patients
- Fiscal impacts and funding sources
- Centralizing coordination of services
- Legislative process

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

Replaces measure.

BACKGROUND:

It can be challenging for some high needs youth to access all the behavioral health services they might need. Service providers report there is often a misalignment of behavioral health services available to youth in a local area and the demand for those services, including some providers requiring a waiting list for potential patients while others have low demand and unused capacity. There are also different services and programs administered by different entities that can be difficult for those in need to navigate.

Senate Bill 944-A establishes a Youth Acute Behavioral Health Leadership Council (Council) in the Governor's Office to study and make recommendations to streamline behavioral health care delivery to youth. It requires the Council to develop a proposal for centralizing the coordination of youth behavioral health care services across multiple agencies and report final recommendations to the Legislative Assembly by October 1, 2018. The measure also requires the Governor to appoint a Behavioral Health Policy Advisor to staff the Council and coordinate behavioral health services between state agencies. Finally, Senate Bill 944-A requires the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) to contract with an in-state nonprofit organization to operate a 24-hour call center dedicated to tracking and providing information about available placements for youth with high behavioral health needs.