

**SJR 6 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY**

**Carrier:** Rep. Sprenger

**House Committee On Education**

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**Action Date:** 04/19/17

**Action:** Be Adopted.

**Vote:** 9-0-0-0

**Yeas:** 9 - Doherty, Evans, Hernandez, McLain, Parrish, Sollman, Sprenger, Vial, Wilson

**Fiscal:** Has minimal fiscal impact

**Revenue:** No revenue impact

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**WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:**

Recommends that all school administrators, teachers, parents and students be educated about the potential health impacts of heavy backpacks and avoid injuries. Recommends licensed medical professionals conduct school scoliosis examinations. Recommends schools work with Parent Teacher Organizations to promote innovative strategies to lessen carrying books. Recommends items for consideration when developing backpack safety. Directs Deputy Superintendent of Public Instruction to communicate the information regarding backpack safety to every school district in the State of Oregon.

**ISSUES DISCUSSED:**

- Repercussions of wearing backpacks on one shoulder as opposed to both
- Long-term effects of wearing backpacks improperly
- Prevention of scoliosis in children

**EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:**

No amendment.

**BACKGROUND:**

The National Safety Council recommends that parents observe their children’s backpacks, since the weight can negatively affect their posture and create shoulder and back pain. The American Chiropractic Association (ACA) recognizes the potential concerns for heavy backpacks on the backs of young children, and it is recommended the weight is evenly distributed and the backpack is carried on both shoulders. The ACA does not endorse rolling backpacks as a solution because they have been found to clutter corridors and become a tripping hazard. It is recommended backpacks maintain an ergonomic design, are never longer than four inches below the waist and have padded shoulder straps.

This joint resolution accompanies Senate Bill 216, which requires the Oregon Department of Education to provide backpack safety educational materials to school districts. Senate Joint Resolution 6 recommends the education about the potential health impacts of heavy backpacks, and directs the Deputy Superintendent of Public Instruction to communicate the information regarding backpack safety to every school district in the State of Oregon.