

HB 3160 B STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Carrier: Sen. Olsen

Senate Committee On Human Services

Action Date: 05/01/17

Action: Do pass with amendments to the A-Eng bill. (Printed B-Eng.)

Vote: 4-0-1-0

Yeas: 4 - Dembrow, Gelser, Monnes Anderson, Olsen

Exc: 1 - Knopp

Fiscal: Has minimal fiscal impact

Revenue: No revenue impact

Prepared By: Matt Doumit, LPRO Analyst

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." Declares emergency, effective on passage.

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:

Adds emergency clause.

BACKGROUND:

Oregon law recognizes the use of a "white cane" as a signal that the user is blind or blind and deaf. A driver's failure to yield to an individual with a white cane is a traffic violation, as is the use of a white cane by someone who is not blind. A blind person is legally defined as 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 within 20 feet to see what a person with normal vision can see at 200 feet.

House Bill 3160-B recognizes the use of a white cane on highways and in other public places by individuals with limited vision, and exempts those with limited vision from offenses for unlawful use of a white cane. "Limited vision" is defined as visual acuity not exceeding 20/70 and 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.