

HB 2347 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Human Services

Action Date: 05/31/17

Action: Do pass with amendments and requesting referral to Ways and Means. (Printed A-Engrossed.)

Vote: 5-0-0-0

Yeas: 5 - Dembrow, Gelser, Knopp, Monnes Anderson, Olsen

Fiscal: Fiscal impact issued

Revenue: No revenue impact

Prepared By: Matt Doumit, LPRO Analyst

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Continues Department of Human Services (DHS) authority to offer resources to individuals eligible for certain temporary assistance for needy families (TANF) programs until July 1, 2019. Delays implementation of increase in cash assistance to families enrolled in Family Pre-Supplemental Security Income/Social Security Disability Insurance (Family Pre-SSI/SSDI) programs until July 1, 2019. Delays implementation of increase in duration that family receiving TANF may continue to receive assistance when eligibility is impacted by employment or increased work hours until July 1, 2019. Requires savings from TANF policy changes or enrollment reductions to be used to increase TANF grants to specified amount. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- History of TANF expansion
- Current TANF program operation
- Impact of budget restrictions on TANF expansion, and necessity to delay expansion
- Provisions of amendment

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

Requires savings from implementation of TANF policy changes or TANF enrollment reductions to be used to increase TANF grants to 1996 grant values, adjusted to reflect increases in federal consumer price index.

BACKGROUND:

The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program provides cash assistance to low-income families. Cash assistance is used to meet a family's basic needs such as food, clothing, shelter and utilities. To qualify for TANF, families must be at or below 37 percent of the federal poverty level and have few assets. Most people who receive TANF are required to participate in the Job Opportunities and Basic Skills Program (JOBS), which provides a variety of activities including education, health services, life skills, and job training. Over 60,000 Oregonians participate in the TANF program. In 2007, the Legislative Assembly expanded state TANF programs. However, since 2008 that expansion has been suspended due to budget concerns stemming from the Great Recession and ongoing recovery.

House Bill 2347-A continues to delay TANF expansion until July 1, 2019, including delaying the expansion of the program and increase in cash assistance paid to families enrolled in State Family Pre-Supplemental Security Income/Social Security Disability Insurance. The measure also extends the suspension of the increase in the amount of time that a family receiving TANF may continue to receive assistance when employment or increased work hours impact their TANF eligibility. The measure also requires any savings that result from policy changes or enrollment reductions in the TANF program to be used to increase the value of TANF grants up to 1996 levels, as adjusted to reflect increases in the federal consumer price index.