

Senate Bill 216

Printed pursuant to Senate Interim Rule 213.28 by order of the President of the Senate in conformance with pre-session filing rules, indicating neither advocacy nor opposition on the part of the President (at the request of Senate Interim Committee on Education for Oregon Chiropractic Association)

SUMMARY

The following summary is not prepared by the sponsors of the measure and is not a part of the body thereof subject to consideration by the Legislative Assembly. It is an editor's brief statement of the essential features of the measure **as introduced**.

Directs Department of Education to prepare certain information related to backpacks, to make information available to school districts and to identify best practices for school districts to disseminate information.

A BILL FOR AN ACT

1 Relating to health impacts of school backpacks.

2 Whereas overloaded school backpacks contribute to the problem of back pain and spinal strain
3 for students across the nation; and

4 Whereas overweight backpacks are a source of repeated low-level stress that may result in
5 chronic neck, shoulder or back pain in children; and

6 Whereas, according to the United States Consumer Product Safety Commission, more than 7,000
7 emergency room visits each year are due to backpack-related injuries; and

8 Whereas studies have shown that heavy loads carried on the back have the potential to damage
9 the soft tissues of the shoulder, causing microstructural damage to the nerves and damage to
10 internal organs; and

11 Whereas students are required to carry heavy textbooks along with computers, cell phones,
12 water bottles, running shoes, band instruments and other equipment; and

13 Whereas more than 90 percent of students carry backpacks that have been found to weigh as
14 much as 25 percent of the student's body weight; and

15 Whereas the Nemours Foundation is dedicated to improving the health of children and recom-
16 mends that students carry backpacks that are not more than 10 to 15 percent of the student's body
17 weight; and

18 Whereas students should always use both straps of a backpack and should avoid using back-
19 packs that have only one strap because they are not as effective at distributing weight and may
20 strain muscles; now, therefore,

21 **Be It Enacted by the People of the State of Oregon:**

22 **SECTION 1. (1) The Department of Education shall prepare information about:**

23 **(a) The potential health impacts of heavy backpacks; and**

24 **(b) Methods by which administrators, teachers, parents and students may take proactive**
25 **measures to avoid injury as the result of heavy backpacks.**

26 **(2) The department shall make available to school districts the information described in**
27 **subsection (1) of this section and shall identify best practices for school districts to dissem-**
28 **inate the information to administrators, teachers, parents and students.**

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NOTE: Matter in **boldfaced** type in an amended section is new; matter [*italic and bracketed*] is existing law to be omitted. New sections are in **boldfaced** type.