

SB 394 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Business and General Government

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Meeting Dates: 2/7, 2/21

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Allows translator district to use specified technologies; aggregate and distribute emergency alerts from federal, state, and local authorities; transmit low power television signals originating on district translators; distribute on-demand content using alternative methods; and, own and operate low power television channels or lease and manage subchannels when authorized by television stations, distribute signals via alternate methods, and finance operations through sale of commercial matter. Removes requirement for district to not delete television commercial matter in signals it transmits without written permission from broadcasting television station or finance district operations through sale of commercial matter in district's transmissions. Allows district, with approval of video-on-demand content producer, to generate revenue in transmissions and alternative distribution through acknowledgement or solicitation of financial support considered necessary for continued operation.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- History and current operation of Blue Mountain Translator District as Oregon's sole translator district
- Value of alternative technologies in delivering local news and alerts

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

Current statute allows for the creation of a translator district to ensure the transmission and reception of television broadcast signals in remote areas of the state where regular transmission of television programming is not otherwise available to the public. Senate Bill 394 allows translator districts to aggregate and distribute emergency alerts and use a range of technologies. The measure also gives districts greater discretion to delete commercial matter in the district's transmissions and to generate revenue.