

HB 2173 -2 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Economic Development

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Sub-Referral To: Joint Committee On Ways and Means

Meeting Dates: 2/11, 2/18, 2/27

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Creates Oregon Broadband Office within the Oregon Business Development Department and defines office responsibilities. Repeals the sunset on the Oregon Broadband Advisory Council. Adds one member to represent consumers and the public at large and expands Council duties.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Leveraging partnerships and funding
- Statewide broadband deployment needs and costs

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

-2 Requires one telecommunications service provider member of the Oregon Broadband Advisory Council to represent a service provider headquartered in rural Oregon. Adds Oregon Department of Transportation to Council. Changes provision for Council to encourage state agencies to utilize broadband telecommunications to instead encourage and facilitate broadband deployment.

BACKGROUND:

The Legislative Assembly created the Oregon Broadband Advisory Council with the passage of House Bill 3158 (2009) to help ensure the implementation of statewide broadband strategies and to serve as a statewide forum for the discussion and exploration of broadband issues. The Council encourages coordination and collaboration to leverage the development and utilization of broadband across the state. The Council reports biennially to the Legislative Assembly on the affordability and accessibility of broadband technology and its use across the state for various purposes. The Council's sunset was extended to January 2, 2020 in 2015.

In December 2018, Governor Brown issued Executive Order 18-31, establishing the Oregon Broadband Office within the Oregon Business Development Department, known as Business Oregon, to develop broadband investment and deployment strategies for underserved areas, promote public-private partnerships, support local broadband planning, advocate for policies that remove barriers to broadband deployment, and help communities access federal and state funds. The Governor's recommended budget for the 2019-2021 biennium includes funding to staff the new office.

House Bill 2173 statutorily codifies the Oregon Broadband Office and defines its broadband investment and deployment strategy responsibilities. The measure also repeals the sunset on the Oregon Broadband Advisory Council and refines its membership and duties.