

HB 2944 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Energy and Environment

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Sub-Referral To: Joint Committee On Ways and Means

Meeting Dates: 3/14

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Establishes nine member Task Force on Oregon Domestic Use Water Supply (Task Force). Directs Task Force to develop strategies for controlling and preventing toxic algal bloom and other impacts of climate change on Oregon's domestic water supply; sampling, testing, and quality inspection of water supplies; fielding of fixed and mobile equipment and technologies; and prioritizing available funding for the highest risk environments. Requires Task Force submit a report to the legislature no later than September 15, 2020. Directs Oregon Water Resources Department to provide staff support to the Task Force. Sunsets Task Force December 31, 2020. Takes effect on the 91st day after 2019 sine die.

REVENUE: May have revenue impact, but no statement yet issued.

FISCAL: May have fiscal impact, but no statement yet issued.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

Harmful algal blooms are caused by high concentrations of certain types of algae that can produce toxic compounds. These blooms can cause sickness and death in humans, pets, and livestock who come into contact with or drink the water. Blooms can also result in hypoxia, or low oxygen, in water bodies, which can kill fish and other wildlife. The Oregon Health Authority is the agency responsible for posting warnings and educating the public about harmful algal blooms. Once a body of water has been identified as having a harmful algal bloom, the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality is responsible for investigating the causes, identifying sources of pollution, and writing a pollution reduction plan.

House Bill 2944 would establish a task force to develop strategies for controlling and preventing toxic algae bloom and other impacts of climate change on Oregon's domestic use water supply; sampling, testing, and quality inspection of water supplies; fielding of fixed and mobile mitigation equipment and technologies; and prioritizing available funding for the highest risk environments. The bill would require the task force report back to the legislature by September 15, 2020. The task force would sunset December 31, 2020.