

HB 2558 -1 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Veterans and Emergency Preparedness

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Sub-Referral To: Joint Committee On Ways and Means

Meeting Dates: 3/14, 4/2

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Directs the Department of Education to conduct a study regarding the impacts of a major seismic event on children, including identification of methods for preparing schools and communities to meet the needs of children following such an event. Directs Department to submit a report to interim committees of the Legislative Assembly by September 15, 2020. Sunsets December 31, 2020. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

NOTE - measure has a subsequent referral to the Committee on Ways and Means

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Physical, mental, and emotional impacts of natural disasters
- Appropriate agency to oversee the task force

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

-1 Replaces original measure. Creates Task Force on Seismic Event Preparation to conduct study on impacts of major seismic event on children. Directs Department of Education to provide staff support for Task Force. Requires Task Force to report to Legislative Assembly by September 15, 2020.

BACKGROUND:

The coast of the Pacific Northwest has, for thousands of years, experienced periodic, catastrophic seismic events related to the Cascadia subduction zone (CSZ), which extends from northern California to British Columbia. However, it was not until the 1980s when scientists recognized the CSZ as an active fault that poses a major threat to Oregon. Since then, building codes have been updated, and state and regional preparations have been undertaken to prepare Oregon citizens and the state's infrastructure and governments to better sustain through a potential earthquake, and also to be better able to recover following such an event.

The Oregon Seismic Safety Policy Advisory Committee (OSSPAC) defines the goal of seismic resilience as follows: "Oregon citizens will not only be protected from life-threatening physical harm, but because of the risk reduction measures and pre-disaster planning, communities will be able to recover more quickly and with less continuing vulnerability following a Cascadia subduction zone earthquake and tsunami."

House Bill 2558 Directs the Department of Education to conduct a study of the impact of a major seismic impact on children, and to report back results to the Legislative Assembly by September 15, 2020.