

SB 856 -1 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Business and General Government

Prepared By: Tyler Larson, LPRO Analyst

Sub-Referral To: Joint Committee On Ways and Means

Meeting Dates: 3/19, 4/4

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Establishes Oregon Office of New Americans (Office) in Governor's office to serve as central resource for welcoming and orienting new immigrants. Requires Governor to appoint no fewer than three individuals to carry out responsibilities. Requires office to: connect immigrants from diverse communities; provide assistance in accessing specified services; maintain community events calendars in native languages; be a resource for specified information including education and employment opportunities; provide data and information to better understand and meet needs of immigrant communities; and, compile specified data. Appropriates unstated amount of General Fund to support Oregon Office of New Americans.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

-1 Requires Office to identify and provide assistance information to Legislative Assembly on benefit cliffs; train employers to help businesses be more inclusive for immigrants and refugees; train immigrants in interviewing, cover letter, and resume development and other job skills; provide information on naturalization; hold career summits; provide information on alternative pathways for recredentialing; provide culturally relevant sector-specific job training; and provide career counseling in projected job markets and specific positions. Requires Oregon Advocacy Commissions Office (OACO) to coordinate businesses, institutions of higher education, licensing agencies, and resettlement agencies to streamline recredentialing and entry into job market for immigrants and refugees. Requires OACO to appoint at least one individual to coordinate specified activities.

BACKGROUND:

According to the Migration Policy Institute, immigrants accounted for 13.5 percent of the total population of the United States in 2016. Immigrants and their U.S.-born children are now 27 percent of the overall U.S. population. Immigrants made up 17 percent of the civilian labor force in 2016. In Oregon, immigrants make up roughly 10 percent of the state's total population.

Senate Bill 856 establishes the Oregon Office of New Americans to serve as the central resource for welcoming and orienting new immigrants coming to Oregon. The measure requires the Governor to appoint at least three individuals to connect new immigrants to their communities, essential services, and opportunities.