

HB 2556 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Education

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Meeting Dates: 4/22, 5/15

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Requires a principal or teacher to excuse a student for up to seven days if student is a dependent of an active-duty member of the U.S. Armed Forces. Defines Armed Forces of the United States to include Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard and their reserve components; U.S. National Guard; and the Oregon National Guard. Exempts the seven days of absences from the maximum allowable excused absences provided by school boards. First applies to 2019-2020 school year. Declares emergency, effective July 1, 2019.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Frequency of military deployments
- Confusion over what is an excused absence
- Service member family support groups
- School awareness of deployment issues
- Upcoming major deployment of Oregon National Guard
- Need for children of deployed service member to attend ceremonies, deployments, and homecomings
- Stress and anxiety related to having a family member deployed
- Need to support troops

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

Oregon law requires enrolled students to regularly attend their public school. Irregular attendance is considered as eight unexcused, one-half day absences in any four-week school period. Oregon law permits a principal or teacher to excuse an absence for sickness of the student, sickness of a family member, emergency, or other reasons if advanced arrangements are made. House Bill 2556 provides up to seven days of excused absences for children of active-duty members of U.S. Armed Forces.