

SB 579 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Rules

Prepared By: Josh Nasbe, Counsel

Meeting Dates: 6/5, 6/10

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Creates exception to statutory waiting period under Death with Dignity Act, if patient's attending physician medically confirms that patient will, within reasonably medical judgment, die before expiration of waiting period. Requires medically confirmed certificate of the imminence of patient's death be included in patient's medical record.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

The Oregon Death with Dignity Act was enacted by initiative petition in 1994. In addition to other safeguards, the law requires multiple requests for lethal medication and establishes waiting periods. A patient must complete a written request and make two oral requests for lethal medication. By law, 15 days must elapse between the two oral requests, and between the initial oral request and the writing of a prescription. Similarly, 48 hours must elapse between the patient's written request and the writing of a prescription. Senate Bill 579 creates an exception to these waiting periods when the patient's attending physician medically confirms that patient will, within reasonably medical judgment, die before expiration of the relevant waiting period.