

HB 2231 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Carrier: Rep. Alonso Leon

House Committee On Business and Labor

Action Date: 04/08/19

Action: Do pass with amendments. (Printed A-Eng.)

Vote: 7-4-0-0

Yeas: 7 - Barker, Bynum, Clem, Doherty, Evans, Fahey, Holvey

Nays: 4 - Barreto, Boles, Bonham, Boshart Davis

Fiscal: Fiscal impact issued

Revenue: No revenue impact

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Meeting Dates: 4/1, 4/3, 4/8

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Provides right to health care interpreters paid by the State of Oregon to collectively bargain with State of Oregon.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Employment status of interpreters
- Practice of health care interpreters to contract with private third-party companies and court interpreters to contract directly with Judicial Department
- Requirements to be "qualified" or "certified" health care interpreter
- Policy in statute to require use of certified or qualified health care interpreters whenever possible
- Use of nonqualified and noncertified interpreters
- National industry standards for compensation
- Fear of retaliation leads to reluctance to individually demand change in compensation
- Problems of including court interpreters in same bargaining unit as health care interpreters

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

Removes court interpreters from provisions of measure.

BACKGROUND:

Interpreters are hired by public entities in the health care and justice systems. Health care interpreters provide communication services to people with limited English proficiency and typically contract with private companies that are under contract with the State of Oregon to provide interpreter services. Proficiency standards are set in statute for qualified and certified health care interpreters, and the Legislative Assembly has stated that it is the policy to require the use of certified or qualified health interpreters whenever possible. ORS 413.552.

House Bill 2231-A allows health care interpreters who are paid by the State of Oregon the right to collectively bargain as though they are public employees governed by the Public Employees Collective Bargaining Act (PECBA). The measure specifies that these interpreters are not for any other purpose to be considered employees of the State or any other public body. Should they decide to organize, all health care interpreters in the state will be in the same bargaining unit.