

HB 2556 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Carrier: Sen. Thomsen

Senate Committee On Education

Action Date: 05/15/19
Action: Do pass.
Vote: 5-0-0-0
Yeas: 5 - Gelser, Hass, Heard, Thomsen, Wagner
Fiscal: No fiscal impact
Revenue: No revenue impact
Prepared By: Tamara Dykeman, LPRO Analyst
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, Coast Guard, reserve components, U.S. and Oregon National Guards. Exempts the seven days of absences from the maximum number of excused absences that a school board may provide to a student. 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 members 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 schools. Irregular attendance is considered as eight unexcused, 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 additional days of excused absences for children of active-duty members of U.S. Armed Forces.