

SB 1549 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Health Care

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Meeting Dates: 2/4

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Directs the Oregon Board of Dentistry (Board) to issue a license to practice dental therapy to qualified applicants. Defines qualifications for dental therapy licensure. Prohibits unlicensed practice of dental therapy and use of title “dental therapist” with specified exceptions. Requires dental therapists to practice under the supervision of a dentist and pursuant to a practice plan with the dentist. Specifies required elements of practice plan. Specifies dental therapist scope of practice. Authorizes dental therapists to supervise dental assistants and expanded function dental assistants. Authorizes dental therapists to dispense and orally administer specified drugs. Requires the Board to consult with specified stakeholders in adopting rules related to the practice of dental therapy. Adds a dental therapist member to the Board. Becomes operative on September 1, 2020. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

REVENUE: May have revenue impact, but no statement yet issued.

FISCAL: May have fiscal impact, but no statement yet issued.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

The Oregon Tribes Dental Health Aide Therapist Pilot Project was approved in 2017 to develop a new category of dental personnel in Oregon and teach new oral health care roles to previously untrained individuals. The Pilot Project authorized the Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board to utilize the Alaska Dental Health Aide Therapist (DHAT) program that has been providing services in Alaska for 11 years. The Alaska DHAT program is modeled off the international model of dental nurses that have been providing oral health services in nearly 100 countries around the world.

Senate Bill 1549 would create a dental therapy licensure through the Oregon Board of Dentistry based on the Oregon Tribes Dental Health Aide Therapist Pilot Project.