

HB 4031 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Behavioral Health

Action Date: 02/06/20

Action: Do pass with amendments and be referred to Ways and Means. (Printed A-Eng.)

Vote: 7-0-0-0

Yeas: 7 - Greenlick, Hayden, Lively, Mitchell, Moore-Green, Salinas, Stark

Fiscal: Fiscal impact issued

Revenue: No revenue impact

Prepared By: Zoe Larmer, LPRO Analyst

Meeting Dates: 2/4, 2/6

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Directs the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) to assess supply and demand of behavioral health professionals in Oregon over the next ten years, report findings of assessment to the legislature, and make recommendations for legislation no later than November 1, 2020. Defines the criteria for the behavioral health workforce assessment to include identifying any current gaps in behavioral health workforce, determining the number and type of behavioral health professionals who are completing educational program or obtaining licensure or other authorization to practice, determining the number of unlicensed behavioral health professionals entering the workforce or expanding their scope of practice, identifying barriers to meeting the current goals for the behavioral health field and identifying strategies to removing and overcoming those barriers. Directs the OHA to consult with the Oregon Department of Education, the Higher Education Coordinating Commission and relevant health professional regulatory boards to determine relevant information for the assessment. Takes effect on the 91st day following adjournment sine die.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Pending amendments to remove sections one and three of House Bill 4031
- History of Oregon's Practice Act for licensed professional counselors and therapists (1989)
- Need to assess Oregon's behavioral health workforce
- Jurisdiction of the Board of Licensed Professional Counselors and Therapists
- Washington and Vermont as potential regulatory models for alternative behavioral therapy providers
- Consumers' ability to register a complaint and potential disciplinary process; consumer notification or disclosure by alternative behavioral providers
- Professionalization of alternative behavioral therapy providers
- Need for ongoing discussions about licensing of alternative behavioral therapy providers

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

Removes requirements for persons providing certain alternative behavioral health therapy to obtain licensure. Removes creation of a state registry within the Health Licensing Office (HLO) for alternative behavioral health therapists. Removes requirement to change statutory terms within behavioral health using person-first language. Modifies the criteria for the behavioral health workforce assessment.

BACKGROUND:

In March 2019, the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) and the Eugene Farley, Jr. Health Policy Center released an analysis of the state's current behavioral health workforce including licensed and unlicensed providers. The report found that certain regions and populations are "disproportionately affected" by workforce shortages, statewide, specifically rural regions and pediatric populations. The report found limited-to-no behavioral health prevention or treatment services in elementary and middle schools. The report also highlighted opportunities for Oregon to

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improve data collection to better evaluate and monitor the geographic distribution of licensed and unlicensed providers, practice settings, provider types, population health status, and prevalence of substance use and mental health needs in the state. In April 2019, the Oregon Healthcare Workforce Committee, in conjunction with the Eugene Farley, Jr. Health Policy Center, released a report outlining recommendations on recruitment and retention for the state's current behavioral health workforce.

HB 4031-A directs OHA to assess supply and demand of behavioral health professionals in Oregon over the next ten years and report findings of assessment to the legislature.