

HB 4039 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Human Services and Housing

Action Date: 02/12/20

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

Vote: 9-0-0-0

Yeas: 9 - Helt, Keny-Guyer, Meek, Mitchell, Noble, Sanchez, Schouten, Williams, Zika

Fiscal: Fiscal impact issued

Revenue: No revenue impact

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Meeting Dates: 2/3, 2/12

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Defines “unaccompanied homeless youth.” Directs Department of Human Services (DHS) to conduct a statewide assessment of the needs and continuum of services for unaccompanied homeless youth that determines demographic information and services needed by this population, capacity of community action agencies to serve this population, and existing partnerships and coordination between state agencies, school districts, and nonprofit organizations. Permits DHS to award one-year grants to organizations that provide services to unaccompanied homeless youth. Authorizes DHS to develop program guidelines and to award funds to organizations that serve this population. Directs DHS to provide a preliminary report to an appropriate committee or interim committee of the Legislative Assembly by December 1, 2020, and a final report on efforts to the Legislative Assembly no later than March 1, 2021. Authorizes DHS to award enhancement grants to organizations serving homeless youth to increase accessibility to shelter facilities, and to support outreach, culturally specific services, mental health or substance abuse services, to support transitional housing options, such as host home projects, and to adopt rules to administer the grant program. Defines “host home project,” “long-term host home project,” and “short-term host home project.” Permits DHS to award one-year grants to organizations that operate host home projects for unaccompanied homeless youth. Outlines eligibility requirements for grant application. Requires a background check for a recipient of a host-home grant. Directs DHS to report on the host home projects to Legislative Assembly no later than September 15, 2021. Appropriates General Fund moneys to DHS to conduct statewide assessments (\$230,000), and to provide grants to assist with assessments (\$70,000), provide grants to provide youth services (\$1,000,000), and to provide host home project grants (\$1,200,000). Sunsets grant programs on July 1, 2021, and state assessment on January 1, 2022. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Youth homeless on streets are 60 to 80 percent more likely to be homeless as adults
- Research indicates \$1 million funding can support 700 homeless youth
- Service providers need to integrate mental health professionals with existing staff
- \$3.1 million in biennium funding serving 3,700 homeless youth equates to daily \$1.14 per individual
- Youth-focused shelter and trauma-informed service funding across Oregon communities
- 22,000 kindergarten to grade 12 homeless youth in Oregon; one in 6 are unaccompanied, separated from parents
- Fourteen service grantees for homeless runaway youth funded through Department of Human Services programming

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

Replaces measure.

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BACKGROUND:

In 2011, the Runaway and Homeless Youth (RHY) Program was assigned to the Department of Human Services (DHS). In 2019, it was placed under Self Sufficiency Programs. According to a 2016 report from the DHS Homeless Youth Advisory Committee, during the 2014-2015 school year, Oregon school districts counted 3,232 unaccompanied homeless students. During the January 2015 Oregon Housing and Community Services (OHCS) Point-in-Time count, 1,280 unaccompanied youth plus 135 parenting youth (with 157 children), totaling 1,572 homeless youth were counted.

House Bill 4039-A appropriates \$2.5 million from the General Fund to the Department of Human Services for services to be provided to unaccompanied homeless youth.