

HB 2842 -3 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Housing

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Sub-Referral To: Joint Committee On Ways and Means

Meeting Dates: 2/11

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Establishes Healthy Homes Program within the Oregon Health Authority (OHA). Clarifies purpose of program to provide grants to eligible entities which provide financial assistance to low income households and to landlords for the repair and rehabilitation of residential dwelling units. Defines eligible entity as a local government, local housing authority, nonprofit organization, federally recognized Indian tribe in Oregon, coordinated care organization or regional or statewide housing assistance organization. Directs OHA to adopt rules for eligible entities that apply for grant funding. Allows OHA to set parameters for the extent of home repair and rehabilitation funded under the program. Describes provisions of agreement between OHA and grant award recipients, including: appropriate use of grant funds; reporting requirements; permission of OHA to conduct audits; and, as necessary, repayment of funds not allocated by grant recipient. Requires each Healthy Homes Program grant recipient to submit report on June 30 of each year describing: allocation of funds for direct financial assistance to low income households or landlords for home repair and rehabilitation; data concerning demographic information of households receiving financial assistance; and estimates of energy and health cost savings achieved by assistance grants. Allows OHA to engage with public higher education institutions or nonprofit organizations in developing and establishing methods for evaluating and mitigating health hazards in housing.

Establishes the Healthy Homes Repair Fund in the State Treasury to cover grant funding in addition to the costs of OHA in administering the Healthy Homes Program.

Directs OHA to designate, by rule and for the purposes of grantmaking, environmental justice communities determined to be most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, ocean acidification, and environmental pollution.

Establishes the Interagency Task Force on Healthy Homes, staffed by OHA and with leadership representation from OHA, the Housing and Community Services Department, and the Department of Environmental Quality. Specifies membership, governance and charge of task force related to identifying and addressing the health and safety of homes. Requires task force to submit a report to interim legislative committees related to housing, the Governor, and the Environmental Justice Task Force no later than September 15, 2022. Sunsets task force January 2, 2023.

Takes effect on the 91st day following adjournment sine die.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

-3 Clarifies and defines eligible entities that may participate in Healthy Homes grant program. Expands definition of home repair and rehabilitation to include accessibility, visitability, fire resistance and seismic resistance. Expands definition of residence to include a unit within multifamily housing. Replaces environmental justice communities with environmental justice factor for the purposes of determining grant-eligible entities. Allows Oregon Health Authority to adopt standards and requirements for activities funded by the program. Specifies state agencies and other entities represented on Interagency Task Force. Appropriates \$20 million in General Fund dollars to the authority for the Healthy Homes Repair Fund for the biennium beginning July 1, 2021.

This summary has not been adopted or officially endorsed by action of the committee.

BACKGROUND:

Fifty-four percent of Oregonians live in housing built before 1978. Housing that has not been retrofitted for energy efficiency is expensive to heat or outfit with proper filtration, and, according to the Oregon Health Authority, has been correlated with poor health outcomes for residents, including asthma and other respiratory issues. Oregon Housing and Community Services reports in its Statewide Housing Plan that low-income people and people of color in Oregon are disproportionately burdened by housing costs, spending up to 50 percent of income on housing costs compared to 17 percent of all households in the state.

House Bill 2842 establishes the Healthy Homes Program within the Oregon Health Authority, for the purpose of providing grants to eligible entities for the allocation of financial assistance to low income households and to landlords for the repair and rehabilitation of residential dwelling units. It establishes the Healthy Homes Repair Fund to cover grant and administrative costs, and establishes the Interagency Task Force on Healthy Homes to propose and evaluate solutions to address health hazards in housing.