

HB 2585 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Behavioral Health

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Meeting Dates: 2/22, 3/17

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Establishes the Mental Health for Deaf, Deaf-Blind and Hard of Hearing Individuals' Bill of Rights. Directs Oregon Health Authority (OHA) to provide culturally and linguistically affirmative mental health services to deaf, deaf-blind, and hard of hearing individuals. Prohibits denial of culturally and linguistically affirmative mental health services on the basis that an individual has residual hearing ability or previous experience with another communication mode. Requires deaf, deaf-blind, or hard of hearing individuals admitted to hospital or residential treatment facility be assigned qualified staff member with primary responsibility for coordinating and implementing treatment plan. Directs OHA to appoint advisory committee to make recommendations for statewide access to culturally and linguistically affirmative mental health for deaf, deaf-blind, or hard of hearing individuals. Requires members be appointed by January 1, 2022. Directs OHA to adopt rules for minimum standards for certification of health care interpreters qualified to provide sign language interpretation in mental health treatment settings. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

REVENUE: No revenue impact.

FISCAL: Fiscal impact issued.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Importance of culturally and linguistically affirmative behavioral health services
- Role of interpreters in residential treatment facilities

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

In 2015, the Oregon Legislative Assembly passed House Bill 2419, which expanded the Oregon Health Care Interpreter Program to include sign language interpreters. HB 3415 (2017) and HB 3198 (2019) also examined providing culturally and linguistically affirmative mental health services to deaf, deaf-blind and hard of hearing individuals. The National Association of the Deaf (NAD) has recently proposed model legislation for states to provide oversight of mental health programs that serve deaf and hard of hearing populations.

House Bill 2585 directs Oregon Health Authority (OHA) to provide culturally and linguistically affirmative mental health services to deaf, deaf-blind and hard of hearing individuals.