

HB 3026 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Human Services, Mental Health and Recovery

Prepared By: C. Ross, Counsel

Meeting Dates: 5/6

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Directs the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) to waive fees associated with identification cards for persons experiencing homelessness upon receipt of a fee waiver form, developed by ODOT by rule, and made available through nonprofit organizations that assist homeless persons. Operative January 1, 2022. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

According to Pew Charitable Trusts, many homeless persons lack photo identification because of the cost and difficulty of maintaining personal documents that are required. The National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty (NLCHP) found in 2004 that many homeless people are denied access to benefits and services without photo identification, and a national survey conducted by the Brennan Center for Justice at The NYU School of Law in 2006 found that low-income individuals are the least likely to possess identification.

NLCHP's study indicated that 36 percent of clients could not obtain photo identification because they could not afford it, and the following percentages of homeless persons were denied the following benefits in a given month due to lack of photo identification: 51.1 percent were denied Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits; 30.6 percent were denied Temporary Aid to Needy Families (TANF); 53.1 percent were denied food stamps; 54.1 percent were denied access to shelters or housing services; and 45.1 percent were denied access to Medicaid or medical services. The NLCHP's study also found that people without identification experienced increased difficulty with law enforcement in the following percentages: 33.7 percent of homeless persons were asked by police to produce identification; 59.8 percent reported harassment or arrest if they could not; and 8 percent had their identification confiscated.

House Bill 3026 allows homeless persons to obtain identification cards free of charge.