

HB 4071 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Carrier: Sen. Lieber

Senate Committee On Human Services, Mental Health and Recovery**Action Date:** 02/22/22**Action:** Do pass.**Vote:** 4-0-1-0**Yeas:** 4 - Gelser Blouin, Kennemer, Lieber, Sollman**Exc:** 1 - Robinson**Fiscal:** No fiscal impact**Revenue:** No revenue impact**Prepared By:** C. Ross, LPRO Analyst**Meeting Dates:** 2/22**WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:**

Expands the number of professional behavioral health providers who may be eligible for financial incentives from the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) to improve cultural sensitivity within the workforce by replacing the requirement that providers *be* tribal members, or people of color, or residents in rural areas, with a requirement that providers *increase access* to culturally specific, community and peer-driven services. Refines how underserved communities are described by replacing an itemized list with reference to tribal communities, people of color, and individuals who have lived behavioral health experience. Clarifies providers' eligibility for grants from OHA for supervising others gaining the clinical experience necessary to become licensed. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Oregon Department of Justice concerns regarding the constitutionality of House Bill 2949 (2021); modifications designed to withstand potential legal challenge

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

The Oregon Health Authority (OHA) is currently required to provide financial incentives to improve diversity and cultural competency within the professional behavioral health workforce, and to retain tribal members, people of color, and providers who reside in rural areas. OHA also distributes grants to behavioral health professionals to supervise their colleagues while they gain the clinical experience necessary to become licensed. OHA's administration of supervision grants and financial incentives are both part of a package of targeted investments made pursuant to House Bill 2949 (2021) concerned with equity and diversity issues; workforce shortages and increases in demand exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic; improving the provision of behavioral health services; and increasing the capacity of the behavioral health system.

House Bill 4071 refines and expands professional behavioral health providers' eligibility for financial incentives by replacing the requirement that OHA target providers who *are* tribal members, or people of color, or who live in rural areas, who provide culturally responsive services to a laundry list of underserved communities, with the requirement instead to target providers who *increase access* to culturally specific, community and peer-driven services for tribal communities, people of color, and individuals who have lived behavioral health experience. The measure also makes technical adjustments to clarify providers' eligibility for grants from OHA for supervising others who are trying to acquire the clinical experience necessary for licensure, by referencing the relevant licensing statutes and distinguishing between types of associates who have applied to become licensed.