

SB 1554: COVID-19 After Action Report
Senator Elizabeth Steiner Hayward

Senate Bill 1554 directs Oregon Health Authority to study the public health system response to the COVID-19 pandemic. It requires three reports to interim committees of the Legislative Assembly.

Problem

Over the past five years the Oregon State Legislature has engaged in the process of public health modernization. The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted strengths and challenges of our public health system. To best support ongoing public health modernization and identify areas for improvement and additional funding, we must examine the state and local response to COVID-19 through a Pandemic After Action Study and Report.

Solution

The Oregon Health Authority shall study the state's public health response to the COVID-19 pandemic by contracting with independent consultants. These consultants will work with the Oregon Health Authority and local public health authorities to prepare three separate reports. This legislation is the result of a robust stakeholder conversation including representatives from local and state jurisdictions.

What is a Covid-19 After Action Report?

A review of the pandemic to identify areas of success and areas in need of improvement in our public health response. This report would investigate the COVID-19 response across several levels of engagement to identify areas for improvement, make recommendations, and capture key lessons learned.

What is the timeline for this process?

There will be three distinct reports. The preliminary report will be submitted to an interim committee of the Legislative Assembly by November 15, 2022; the mid-point report will be no later than April 1, 2023; and the final report is to be submitted no later than September 1, 2023.

What will the study include?

The scope of this project is broad. Each report will have distinct analyses, though one report may inform the work of subsequent reports more specifically. The topics that will guide the report include, but are not limited to: funding, emergency management coordination, enforcement of public health mandates, public health messaging, health equity outcomes, and resource management and distribution. Independent consultants will leverage local epidemiological data and investigate the roles of various health care delivery and response systems, public-private partnerships, and assess public health workforce challenges that we face on a local and state level.

The pandemic is still going on; why study it now?

The COVID-19 pandemic is not the last challenge our public health infrastructure will face. Historically, the State of Oregon has underfunded public health and the pandemic has highlighted areas of deficiency. By beginning the After Action Report work this year, we will be better able to support public health investments and pave the way for future legislative action in the 2023 session. We must use this opportunity to learn meaningfully from this experience through a shared, iterative quality improvement process. We have a lot to learn and we must start now.

Supporters

We are pleased to note this bill is co-sponsored by every member of the Legislative Clinicians' Caucus:
Senator Elizabeth Steiner Hayward
Representative Maxine Dexter
Representative Cedric Hayden
Representative Rachel Prusak
Representative Lisa Reynolds

AOC ASSOCIATION OF OREGON COUNTIES



Oregon Coalition of Local Health Officials

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