

SB 810 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Judiciary

Prepared By: Patricia Pascone, LPRO Analyst

Meeting Dates: 2/15

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Changes and clarifies penalties for using unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) to direct a laser at an aircraft while it is in the air, crash into an aircraft while it is in the air, or prevent the takeoff or landing of an aircraft. Specifies that a knowing or intentional violation is a Class A misdemeanor, but it is a Class A felony if the person knowingly, intentionally, or recklessly causes death or serious physical injury with the interference.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

Two statutes currently have conflicting penalties for the same crime of intentionally using an unmanned aircraft system (“UAS”) – what used to be called a drone – to interfere with an aircraft’s operation: it is a Class A misdemeanor under ORS 837.374, while it is a Class A felony under ORS 837.995. There is currently no different classification for when a person knowingly, intentionally or recklessly causes serious physical injury or death. Reckless interference is a Class A violation.

Senate Bill 810 would clarify that using an unmanned aircraft system to intentionally interfere with an aircraft in specified ways is a Class A misdemeanor and it would create a Class A felony for knowingly, intentionally, or recklessly causing serious physical injury or death.