

**SB 787 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY**

**Senate Committee On Judiciary**

---

**Prepared By:** Patricia Pascone, LPRO Analyst

**Meeting Dates:** 2/20

---

**WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:**

Expands crime of assault in the third degree for intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly causing physical injury to a transit operator, a Class C felony, to apply when the transit operator is acting in the course of official duty.

Expands crime of aggravated harassment, a Class C felony, to include when a person knowingly propels saliva, blood, urine, semen, feces, or other dangerous substances at an operator of a public transit vehicle who is acting in the course of official duty.

**ISSUES DISCUSSED:**

**EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:**

No amendment.

**BACKGROUND:**

In ORS 163.165, the crime of assault in the third degree applies when the assault is on an operator of a public transit vehicle who is "in control of or operating the vehicle." Several regional transit agencies presented public safety updates on Jan. 24, 2023 to the Joint Committee on Transportation, and stated that assaults on transit workers have increased in recent years. Data collected by some agencies showed 2020-2022 levels to be four or more times what they were in 2015 and prior years. Most assaults on transit workers happen while the vehicle is not in active operation. Incidents charged as interference with public transportation are a Class C misdemeanor.

Senate Bill 787 would make it a Class C felony to assault a transit operator acting in the course of official duty, or to propel bodily fluids or excretions or other dangerous substances at a transit operator acting in the course of official duty.