

SB 974 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Judiciary

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Meeting Dates: 3/20, 3/27

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Creates crime of sexual assault by fraudulent representation if a person: touches a sexual or intimate part of another person's body for the purpose of causing sexual arousal or sexual gratification of either party, for the purpose of sexual abuse; and falsely represents to the other person that the touching serves a professional purpose. Provides that sexual assault by fraudulent representation is a Class B felony. Requires the Oregon Criminal Justice Commission to classify sexual assault by fraudulent representation as a crime category 8 of the sentencing guidelines grid. Provides that "sexual abuse" includes sexual contact engaged in for the purpose of causing physical injury, humiliation or intimidation. Provides that the prosecution for sexual assault by fraudulent representation may commence within six years after the victim becomes aware or reasonably should have become aware of the criminal nature of the conduct. Defines sexual assault by fraudulent representation as a sex crime requiring sex offender registration. Declares emergency.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

Oregon sex abuse and rape statutes provide that the crimes occur when a person subjects another to sexual contact or intercourse and the victim is a minor; force was used; the victim was incapacitated in some form; or the victim does not consent, depending on the degree of the crime. A person is considered incapable of consenting if: the person is under 18 years of age, incapable of appraising the nature of the person's conduct, mentally incapacity, or physically helpless (ORS 163.315). A person is incapable of appraising the nature of the person's conduct if: the person is unable to understand the nature of the conduct; the person is unable to understand the right to choose whether and how to engage in conduct, including the right to revoke a prior decision to engage in conduct; or the person is unable to communicate a decision to engage in conduct.

The Model Penal Code's "global consent provision" provides that "unless otherwise provided by the Code or by the law defining the offense, assent does not constitute consent if...it is induced by force, duress or deception of a kind sought to be prevented by the law defining the offense." At least eight states have adopted language in their sexual assault statutes similar to the language in the Model Penal Code and at least twelve states have enacted some form of rape by fraud statutes. Oregon's definitions of consent and lack of consent do not contemplate deception or fraudulent representation.

Senate Bill 974 creates a new crime of sexual assault by fraudulent representation if a person touches a sexual or intimate part of another's body for the purpose of causing sexual arousal or sexual gratification of either party and falsely represents to the other person the touching serves a professional purpose and makes sexual assault by fraudulent representation a sex crime requiring sex offender registration.