

HB 2279 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Judiciary

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Meeting Dates: 4/19

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Removes Oregon residency requirement from the Death with Dignity Act. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

Oregon enacted its Death with Dignity Act (Act) in 1997 to allow terminally ill patients who meet certain criteria to end their lives through voluntary self-administration of a lethal dose of a medication prescribed by a physician for that purpose. A qualified patient must be an adult, be a resident of Oregon, have been diagnosed with a terminal illness that will lead to death within six months, and be capable of informed decision-making and communication about health care decisions. The attending physician must request the patient to demonstrate Oregon residency. The Oregon Health Authority (OHA) reviews a sample of medical records and refers any instances of noncompliance with the Act to the applicable licensing authority.

A physician filed a lawsuit in the U.S. District Court of Oregon challenging the residency requirement as violating the United States Constitution. In a March 2022 settlement agreement, OHA, the Oregon Medical Board, and the Multnomah County District Attorney's Office agreed not to enforce the Oregon residency requirement for Death with Dignity patients against physicians. *Gideonse v. Brown, et al.*, Case No. 3:21-cv-01568-AR (D. Or., March 28, 2022). As a further settlement term, OHA agreed to submit a legislative concept for consideration in the next regular legislative session (2023), proposing removal of the Oregon the residency requirement from the law.

House Bill 2279 removes the Oregon residency requirement from the Death with Dignity Act.