

HB 2757 B STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Finance and Revenue

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Meeting Dates: 6/23, 6/23

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Establishes 9-8-8 Trust Fund for improving the statewide coordinated crisis system, including maintaining and improving 9-8-8 suicide prevention and behavioral health crisis hotline. Imposes tax of 40 cents per line per month on consumers and retail subscribers who have telecommunications service or interconnected Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) service and 40 cents per transaction for prepaid telecommunications services, to pay for crisis services system. Prohibits local governments from imposing tax, fee, or surcharge for 9-8-8 services. Requires crisis hotline center to have policies and employee training on other racially and ethnically diverse communities and requires that crisis hotline center staff include individuals who possess the linguistic and cultural competency to respond to individuals within the communities served. Requires cities to enter into memorandum of understanding (MOU) with a county when providing mobile crisis intervention services and specifies contents of MOU. Requires the Oregon Health Authority to establish an advisory committee to provide primary oversight and direction on operation of statewide coordinated crisis system. Exempts services provided under the Oregon Lifeline program from the new tax. Provides appropriation to the Department of Revenue for administration costs. Applies tax to subscriptions and retail transactions beginning January 1, 2024. Sunsets the tax on January 1, 2030 to align with the sunset date of the 911 tax. Takes effect on 91st day following adjournment sine die.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

In 2019, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) proposed 9-8-8 as the nationwide, easy-to-remember, 3-digit dialing code for individuals in crisis to connect to suicide prevention and mental health crisis counselors with the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline. In October 2020, the federal National Suicide Hotline Designation Act of 2020 was signed into law, incorporating 9-8-8 into federal statute as the new Lifeline and Veterans Crisis Line phone number. The act allows a state to collect a fee or charge on telecommunication services to support 9-8-8 related functions, and places limits on the use of funds collected. In 2021, the FCC adopted rules requiring phone service and text providers to add the ability to text 9-8-8 by July 2022.

In 2021, the Legislative Assembly passed House Bill 2417 creating the statewide coordinated crisis system consistent with the framework of the National Suicide Hotline Designation Act. The measure appropriated \$15 million from General Fund to the Oregon Health Authority, with \$5 million to be used for the crisis hotline center and \$10 million to distribute to counties to establish and maintain mobile crisis intervention teams.

The 40 cents per line per month tax created by this measure applies to the same telecommunications lines as the existing 9-1-1 Emergency Communications Tax. Neither tax applies to state and local government lines.