

SB 699 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Carrier: Sen. Manning Jr

Senate Committee On Judiciary

Action Date: 03/02/23
Action: Do pass.
Vote: 3-2-0-0
Yeas: 3 - Gelser Blouin, Manning Jr, Prozanski
Nays: 2 - Linthicum, Thatcher
Fiscal: Fiscal impact issued
Revenue: No revenue impact
Prepared By: Amie Fender-Sosa, LPRO Analyst
Meeting Dates: 2/16, 3/2

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Expands the definition of "public safety officer" to include regulatory specialists (as related to the Oregon Liquor and Cannabis Commission (OLCC)) who would be eligible for an award of benefits from the Public Safety Memorial Fund.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- OLCC regulatory specialists are sometimes in dangerous situations; for example, they inspect illegal grow operations with law enforcement and visit bars late at night to ensure compliance
- They wear bulletproof vests and pepper spray, but do not have firearms
- Regulatory specialists provide vital public health and safety function for the state
- It is not always possible to work in pairs
- Regulatory specialists are eligible for the Memorial, but not the Memorial Fund
- Training provided by the Department of Public Safety Standards and Training (DPSST)
- Job not comparable to police officers or other positions that qualify for the Memorial Fund

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

Established by the Legislative Assembly in 1999, the Oregon Public Safety Memorial Fund (PSMF) is administered and staffed by DPSST, in conjunction with a Governor-appointed PSMF Board of public safety constituents. The fund provides financial assistance to public safety officers who are permanently and totally disabled as a result of a line of duty injury, and to family members of the public safety officers who have been killed or permanently and totally disabled in the line of duty. The PSMF is supported with Criminal Fine Account moneys. The statutory benefit for a qualifying death or disability is a lump sum payment of \$25,000. Additionally, the six-member PSMF Board may award discretionary benefits to assist with mortgage payments, health or dental insurance coverage payments, or higher education scholarships.

"Public safety officer" currently includes corrections officers, firefighters (including volunteer firefighters), parole and probation officers, police officers (including reserve), and youth correction officers.

"Regulatory specialist" is defined in ORS 471.001 as a full-time employee of the Oregon Liquor and Cannabis Commission (OLCC) who is authorized to act as an agent of the commission in conducting inspections or investigations, making arrests and seizures, aiding in prosecutions for offenses, issuing citations for violations and otherwise enforcing commission rules and any other statutes the commission considers related to regulating liquor, marijuana or marijuana-derived products.

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Senate Bill 699 would allow OLCC regulatory specialists to be eligible for receipt of benefits from the Public Safety Memorial fund.