

HB 3247 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water

Action Date: 03/14/23

Action: Do pass with amendments and be referred to Ways and Means by prior reference.
(Printed A-Eng.)

Vote: 8-0-1-0

Yeas: 8 - Boice, Gamba, Hartman, Helm, Levy B, Marsh, McLain, Owens

Exc: 1 - Scharf

Fiscal: Fiscal impact issued

Revenue: No revenue impact

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Meeting Dates: 3/7, 3/14

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Appropriates \$3.73 million General Fund moneys to the Higher Education Coordinating Commission for the Oregon State University Oregon Veterinary Diagnostics Laboratory to monitor, prevent, and respond to zoonotic diseases and specifies their distribution between personnel (\$2.5 million), equipment (\$330,000), and a feasibility study and design of a new veterinary diagnostics lab (\$900,000).

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Ability of the Veterinary Diagnostics Laboratory to investigate prevention strategies and diagnostics for currently unknown diseases
- Capability of diagnosing currently unknown diseases at other facilities in Oregon
- Prevalence of Chronic Wasting Disease in Oregon
- Current state and capacity of the Veterinary Diagnostics Laboratory

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

Specifies total amount of General Fund moneys appropriated under the measure as \$3.73 million. Distributes \$2.5 million to the Oregon Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory (Laboratory) for personnel to address public health needs. Decreases funds dedicated to equipment at the Laboratory from \$500,000 to \$330,000. Removes funds for the establishment of a chronic wasting disease testing program.

BACKGROUND:

A zoonotic disease refers to an infectious disease caused by a pathogen that has jumped from a non-human animal to a human. Zoonotic diseases can be transmitted to humans in a variety of ways and may represent a major public health problem. Examples include rabies, lyme disease, and bird flu.

Chronic wasting disease (CWD) is an infectious disease affecting deer, elk, and moose across North America which is spread through direct body contact or contact with infectious material and results in gradual loss of body fat and muscle mass. Although the zoonotic potential of CWD is considered low, identification of multiple CWD strains and the potential for agent evolution upon serial passage hinders a definitive conclusion. To prevent the spread of CWD in Oregon, the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife operates game check stations along major highways during deer and elk hunting seasons and requires all hunters transporting harvested wildlife to stop when a check station is encountered. Sample material is sent out of state for analysis as the Oregon Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory does not currently have the capacity to test for CWD.

House Bill 3247 A appropriates General Fund moneys to the Higher Education Coordinating Commission for distribution to the Oregon State University Veterinary Diagnostics Laboratory to monitor, prevent, and respond to

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zoonotic diseases through personnel, equipment, and a feasibility study and design of a new veterinary diagnostics lab.