

HB 3349 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Economic Development and Small Business

Action Date: 04/04/23

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

Vote: 11-0-0-0

Yeas: 11 - Bynum, Diehl, Elmer, Javadi, Lively, Morgan, Nguyen D, Osborne, Pham H, Ruiz, Walters

Fiscal: Fiscal impact issued

Revenue: No revenue impact

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Meeting Dates: 3/30, 4/4

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Requires Oregon Solutions at Portland State University (PSU) to collaborate in development of infrastructure readiness hub for purpose of improving community’s awareness of, and access to state and federal funding opportunities related to natural or built infrastructure, including ability to manage and successfully expend funds. Infrastructure funding readiness hub must place particular emphasis on capacities to access and secure near-term federal funding opportunities. Infrastructure funding readiness hub must include, but is not limited to the following components: inventory of funding opportunities related to natural or built infrastructure; systems or processes to track state matching fund needs; mechanisms for ongoing statewide coordination to increase funding readiness, with particular emphasis on opportunities to increase federal funding readiness; recommendations to better align state and federal funding opportunities; identification of needs of environmental justice communities, communities who experienced historic lack of investment, communities with infrastructure in need of critical upgrades and communities with limited infrastructure, and opportunities to increase federal funding readiness of those communities; and mechanisms to track benefits and outcomes of coordinated approach to infrastructure funding readiness. Requires Oregon Solutions to coordinate with the Governor’s Office, Regional Solutions Program state agencies with programs related to infrastructure funding, and other relevant entities. Permits Oregon Solutions to award grants or stipends to entities who participate in collaborative development of infrastructure funding readiness hub. Requires Oregon Solutions to submit report on development of infrastructure funding readiness to Legislative Assembly no later than December 31, 2024. Requires Oregon Solutions enter into contracts with League of Oregon Cities, Association of Oregon Counties, Special Districts Association of Oregon, Oregon Economic Development Districts Association, Oregon Conservation Partnership, Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians Economic Development Corporation, and Oregon Community Foundation to act as funding navigators within their respective areas of expertise. Funding navigators will increase access to information, resources, and assistance for navigating available funding opportunities related to natural or built infrastructure; develop inventory of state matching funds necessary to secure federal funds for natural or built infrastructure; identify barriers to accessing state and federal funding opportunities, or securing state or local matching funds, for natural or built infrastructure; and develop recommendations to address barriers for cities, counties, special districts, and nine federally recognized Indian tribes. Appropriates \$2.4 million from General Fund to Higher Education Coordinating Commission for purpose of entering into agreement with Oregon Solutions at PSU. Declares emergency, effective upon passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Lack of capacity for smaller, community-based organizations to identify and apply for federal funds
- Current federal funding opportunities

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- Ability of infrastructure readiness hubs to build and share resources and provide necessary training and assistance in applying for and securing state match and federal funds
- Opportunities to apply for federal funding to support environmentally focused organizations and conservation networks
- Reducing barriers to community-based organizations in seeking funding

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

Replaces the measure.

BACKGROUND:

House Bill 3349 A establishes infrastructure funding readiness hubs and funding navigators as a collaborative partnership between Oregon Solutions at Portland State University (PSU), the Governor's Regional Solution team, and local government and community organizations. Together the organizations will collaborate to improve awareness of, and access to, state and federal funding opportunities, with a focus on near-term federal funding opportunities, for organizations that lack sufficient capacity to effectively navigate, seek, and apply for relevant federal funding available such as the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) and the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA).

The measure requires Oregon Solutions to collaborate in development of infrastructure readiness hub for the purpose of improving community's awareness of, and access to state and federal funding opportunities related to natural or built infrastructure, including ability to manage and successfully expend funds. The infrastructure funding readiness hubs must include: an inventory of funding opportunities related to natural or built infrastructure; systems or processes to track state matching fund needs; mechanisms for ongoing statewide coordination to increase funding readiness, with particular emphasis on opportunities to increase federal funding readiness; recommendations to better align state and federal funding opportunities; identification of needs of environmental justice communities, communities who experienced historic lack of investment, communities with infrastructure in need of critical upgrades and communities with limited infrastructure, and opportunities to increase federal funding readiness of those communities; and mechanisms to track benefits and outcomes of coordinated approach to infrastructure funding readiness.