

HB 3426 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Carrier: Sen. Manning Jr

Senate Committee On Veterans, Emergency Management, Federal and World Affairs

Action Date: 05/09/23
Action: Do pass.
Vote: 3-0-1-2
Yeas: 3 - Manning Jr, President Wagner, Woods
Exc: 1 - Gorsek
Abs: 2 - Linthicum, Thatcher
Fiscal: No fiscal impact
Revenue: No revenue impact
Prepared By: Regina Wilson, LPRO Analyst
Meeting Dates: 5/4, 5/9

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Amends 9-8-8 operator staff trainings and policies to include firefighters and first responders as high-risk and specialized populations.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Firefighter and first responder rates of suicide, anxiety and depression
- Firefighter and first responder public service to communities
- Cumulative impact of special, high-risk employment factors of firefighter and first responder service

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

The National Suicide Hotline Designation Act passed unanimously by Congress October 2020 and replaced the National Suicide Hotline number with the three-digit number "9-8-8". The Legislative Assembly appropriated \$15 million in House Bill 2417 (2021) to the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) to establish 9-8-8 call centers and enhance mobile crisis services. House Bill 2417 also required 9-8-8 call centers to establish policies and train staff on serving high-risk and specialized populations.

According to a 2021 brief by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), first responders including law enforcement officers, firefighters, emergency medical services (EMS) clinicians, and public safety telecommunicators, are at an elevated risk for suicide due to workplace stress and trauma. The CDC cites law enforcement officers and firefighters as more likely to die by suicide than in the line of duty; it notes that EMS providers are 1.39 times more likely to die by suicide than the public. The CDC also suggests that culturally competent mental health resources are needed for first responders, including trained personnel that understand the unique demands and culture in which they operate.

House Bill 3426 requires 9-8-8 call centers to include firefighters and first responders as high-risk and specialized populations in operator trainings and policies.