

SB 330 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Energy and Environment

Prepared By: Beth Reiley, LPRO Analyst

Sub-Referral To: Joint Committee On Ways and Means

Meeting Dates: 3/31, 4/7

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

The measure directs the Public Utility Commission to adopt standards requiring the underground placement of electric power lines and standards for providing an exemption from the requirement.

Detailed Summary

Requires the Public Utility Commission (PUC) to adopt standards requiring the underground placement of electric power lines. Stipulates standards must require the underground placement of an electric power line if a person is placing a new electric power line or replacing a functionally obsolete, damaged or destroyed overhead electric power line; and provide criteria for the PUC to use to determine whether to grant an exception. Authorizes a person to apply to the PUC for an exception and requires the PUC to consider cost but prohibits PUC from granting an exemption based solely on costs. Requires PUC to grant an exemption if the incremental cost is _ percent or greater than placing it overhead, or the cost of acquiring an underground right of way is _ percent or greater than acquiring overhead right of way.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

The Public Utility Commission (PUC) oversees the investor-owned utilities that are required to maintain safe, reliable, and secure operation of electric power and thousands of miles of telecommunication lines throughout Oregon. The PUC establishes and enforces regulations and promotes practices so the state's right-of-ways, both underground and overhead power lines, are constructed, operated, and maintained in a safe and efficient manner.