

HB 3077 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Emergency Management, General Government, and Veterans

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Meeting Dates: 3/4, 3/27

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

The measure allows local government employees to volunteer for up to 30 days in a year to support wildland fire suppression in emergency situations.

Fiscal impact: TBD

Revenue impact: TBD

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Examples of personal stories of fighting wildland fires
- Confirmation that volunteers will be credentialed and trained
- Questions on how this change would impact employee health benefits

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

Oregon Revised Statute (ORS) 401.378 allows state agencies and other public employers to grant a leave of absence to employees who volunteer to participate in disaster relief or recovery services in the State of Oregon. The cumulative leave cannot exceed 15 workdays in any 12-month period and does not result in a loss of compensation, seniority, vacation time, sick leave, or accrued overtime for which the employee is otherwise eligible. Compensation to an employee granted leave is at the employee's regular rate of pay for regular work hours during which the employee is absent from work.

ORS 476.574 grants a leave of absence to volunteer firefighters of a rural fire protection district, or a firefighter employed by a city or a private firefighting service, until release from such service permits the employee to resume the duties of employment. Employers are not required to pay wages or other compensation during the leave, but when the employee returns all benefits and rights earned during the leave of absence will be restored.