

SB 471 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Workforce

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Meeting Dates: 3/1

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Requires employer of 20 or more employees to grant unpaid employee leave of absence to perform duties as volunteer firefighter, member of Civil Air Patrol Pacific Region, or Oregon Association of Reserve Peace Officers. Requires employer of 50 or more employees to grant up to 14-days unpaid leave for training related to those duties. Prohibits employer from removing or discharging employee because of such leave. Requires employer to reinstate employee to former or equivalent positions without loss of seniority or earned benefits. Establishes that violations of this Act constitute unlawful employment practices.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

BACKGROUND:

Current law requires certain employers to grant employees unpaid leaves of absence for the following purposes:

- Employee is responding to a summons for jury duty (ORS 10.090)
- Employee is called into active service or active duty by any state in which the employee is a member of the state's organized militia (ORS 659A.086)
- Employee is a spouse of a member of the Armed Forces of the United States, the National Guard, or the military reserve forces of the United States who has been notified of an impending call or order to active duty, before deployment, and on leave from deployment (ORS 659A.093)
- Employee is caring for infant, newly adopted child, newly placed foster child, family member with serious health condition, child with illness or requiring home care; personally recovering from or seeking treatment for serious health condition, or dealing with death of family member (ORS 659A.159)
- Employee is attending a criminal proceeding (ORS 659A.192)
- Employee is taking leave related to being victim of domestic violence, harassment, sexual assault or stalking (ORS 659A.272)

SB 471 addresses a concern that volunteer emergency responders need greater flexibility in the workplace to accommodate their ability to take emergency calls. SB 471 would require employers with 20 or more employees to grant unpaid leave to employees performing duties related to service as volunteer firefighters, reserve peace officers, or civil air patrol members. For employers with 50 or more employees, SB 471 also requires employers to allow unpaid leaves of absence up to 14 days for employees receiving training related to those volunteer duties. If an employer denies such a leave request, SB 471 establishes remedies for violations as unlawful employment practices. which allows the employee to file a claim with the Bureau of Labor and Industries.