

SB 664 -1 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Education

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Sub-Referral To: Joint Committee On Student Success

Meeting Dates: 2/20, 2/27

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Requires school districts to provide instruction about the Holocaust and genocide. Requires design of the instruction to provide students with specific learning outcomes. Directs Oregon Department of Education to provide technical assistance to school districts on the implementation of curriculum. Requires instruction to begin in the 2020-2021 school year.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Percentage of U.S. citizens, Canadians, and Europeans that have knowledge of the Holocaust
- Impact of Alter Wiener on Oregon students and others
- Incidences of anti-Semitism and hate crimes in Oregon and United States
- Number and type of hate groups
- Holocaust survivor stories
- Importance of understanding patterns of genocide
- Characteristics of effective genocide prevention programs
- Other states' adoption of Holocaust curriculum
- Availability of source material for curriculum

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

-1 Replaces the word "morality" with "immortality" prior to the phrase "of the Holocaust." Removes the word "similar" before the phrase "acts of mass violence." Directs the State Board of Education to adopt content standards for Holocaust and genocide studies in consultation with local Holocaust education organizations. Requires school districts to provide instruction based on the adopted standards.

BACKGROUND:

School districts must provide instructional programs that include content standards adopted by the State Board of Education. In May 2018, the Oregon State Board of Education adopted new content standards for social studies that require high school students to study the oppression of ethnic and religious groups. Social studies standard HS.65 requires students to "identify and analyze the nature of systemic oppression on ethnic and religious groups, as well as other traditionally marginalized groups, in the pursuit of justice and equality in Oregon, the United States and the world." The social studies standards do not include specific references to the Holocaust or genocide.

PRELIMINARY