

HB 2243 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Business and General Government

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Meeting Dates: 4/25

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Defines "public library" as a public agency that provides free and equal access to library and information services for all residents of a city, county, library service district, school district, community college district, or library district. Requires State Library Board to establish minimum conditions for public libraries that includes financial support from public funds and regular open hours and considers the library's service population.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

Current statute finds that 1) an informed citizenry is indispensable to the proper function of a democratic society; 2) libraries constitute a cultural, informational, and educational resource essential to Oregonians; and, 3) library services should be widely available throughout the state to bring Oregonians convenient opportunities for reading, study, and free inquiry. To achieve the statutory goal of convenient library access, the Oregon State Library is required to promote the establishment, development, and support of local library services, including library services for children and youth and Oregonians who are print-disabled. The Oregon State Library Board sets strategic plans and policies for the State Library and adopts rules to carry out the purposes of the State Library.

House Bill 2243 amends the definition of "public library" to a public agency that provides free and equal access to library information services for all residents of a local government unit, and requires the State Library Board to establish minimum conditions that a public library must meet, including at least standards for public financial support and regularly scheduled open hours. Any standards adopted by the Board must take into account each library's service population.