

HB 3166 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Water

Prepared By: Allison Daniel, LPRO Analyst

Meeting Dates: 2/25

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Requires Legislative Policy and Research Office (LPRO) to study and make recommendations on establishment of a new water measurement program. Requires LPRO to report results to interim committee related to water no later than September 15, 2022. Repeals study requirements on January 2, 2023.

May have fiscal impact, but no statement yet issued.

May have revenue impact, but no statement yet issued.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

Under Oregon law, all water belongs to the public and is to be used for a beneficial purpose without waste. With some exceptions, water users must obtain a water right to use water from any source. When water is scarce, water users are allocated water based on the date of their water right, with holders of the oldest water rights allocated water first, and holders of newer water rights receiving their allocation according to the availability of water. Many water rights include conditions that require the water user to submit data to the Oregon Water Resources Department.

In 2000, the Water Resources Commission developed a strategic plan for improving surface water measurement in areas with the greatest impact on streamflows. Recently, the Department identified a need to revisit the 2000 Strategic Measurement Plan to better address high-priority water management and policy needs for both surface and groundwater.

House Bill 3166 would require the Legislative Policy and Research Office to study and make recommendations to an interim committee regarding the establishment of a new water measurement program no later than September 15, 2022.