

HB 2355 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Economic Recovery and Prosperity

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Sub-Referral To: Joint Committee On Ways and Means

Meeting Dates: 2/11, 3/16

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Requires Oregon Business Development Department to develop, by rule, a program to award matching grants to tribal governments. Specifies the uses of grant moneys to include new positions in tribal government devoted to economic development activities for the tribe and related expenses. Limits the term, number, and amount of grants to be awarded to a tribe. Appropriates an undetermined amount from the General Fund to the Oregon Business, Innovation and Trade Fund. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Scope of duties for position
- Transition from cost-sharing between state and tribes to full-time payment by tribes

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

The Oregon Business Development Department, more commonly known as "Business Oregon," is the state's economic development agency. Its mission is to invest in Oregon businesses, communities, and people to promote a globally competitive, diverse, and inclusive economy. Business Oregon delivers its business development programs through Regional Development Officers, who work on a day-to-day basis with businesses and local governments, including tribal nations. Oregon has nine federally recognized Tribes.

In its 2020 "Report of Government to Government Activities with Oregon's Nine Federally Recognized Tribes," Business Oregon outlined several areas of technical assistance provided by the Department to the tribes. In the report, the Department stated, "Oregon Tribal Governments often lack the necessary internal capacity to build and retain the institutional knowledge to effectively conduct economic development activities to promote opportunities and job growth on a long-term basis." In partnership with tribes, Business Oregon developed House Bill 2355 to establish a cost-share grant program between the state and the Oregon Tribes to fund full time tribal employees dedicated solely to carrying out economic development activities.