

HB 2498 -1 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Joint Committee On Transportation

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Meeting Dates: 3/4, 3/25

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Specifies that a registered vehicle owner may request that the registration card issued for a vehicle include information that the owner and/or operator of the vehicle may be deaf or hard of hearing. Prohibits Department of Transportation from adding a restriction on a driver license or driver permit if the restriction is related to the holder being deaf or hard of hearing.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Intended to assist communication between drivers and law enforcement
- Purpose of informing law enforcement prior to officer approaching vehicle
- New computer system makes this an easier change than it would have been in the past
- Indicator would not require verification by medical professional

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

-1 Adds provision to allow applicant for driver license or permit to request addition of information to card issued specifying that the person is deaf or hard of hearing.

FISCAL: Minimal fiscal impact, no statement issued

REVENUE: No revenue impact

BACKGROUND:

In Oregon, vehicle owners are not required to disclose that they are deaf or hard of hearing. Several states, such as Michigan and Wisconsin, offer visor cards that can be placed on the sun visor to be used to assist with communication with law enforcement officers in the event of a traffic stop. The visor cards include information stating the driver is either deaf or hard of hearing, tips for communicating with the driver, and guidance on what to do if the driver is going to be arrested.

House Bill 2498 creates provisions for the Department of Transport to include information that the vehicle owner is deaf or hard of hearing on the vehicle's registration card at the request of the registered owner. The measure prohibits the Department of Transportation from adding restrictions on obtaining a driver license or driver permit based on the applicant being deaf or hard of hearing.