

SB 201 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Judiciary

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Meeting Dates: 5/11, 5/25

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Provides that an individual is guilty of driving under the influence of intoxicants (DUII) if the individual has a .08 percent or higher blood alcohol level within two hours of driving as measured by a breath or blood test. Clarifies that fine for DUII is enhanced if person has a .15 percent or higher blood alcohol level within two hours of driving. Requires prosecutor to prove individual did not drink between driving and breath or blood test if seeking to prove guilt by showing defendant had blood alcohol level at or above .08 percent. Clarifies that charge for DUII may be enhanced if person has been convicted of two or more DUIIs or similar offenses in other states and that manslaughter or assault charges involving a vehicle may be enhanced if person has been convicted of three or more DUIIs or similar offenses in other states. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Similar laws in other states
- Recent court cases
- Efforts of workgroup
- Amendments adopted by Senate Judiciary Committee

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

Under ORS 813.010, prosecutors can prove that a person is guilty of driving under the influence of intoxicants (DUII) if they show that the person, at the time of driving, had a .08 percent or higher blood alcohol level, was under the influence of intoxicating liquor, cannabis, a controlled substance or an inhalant, or was under the influence of any combination thereof. Whether the person has the requisite blood alcohol level is determined by a breath or blood test, usually taken at a police station or medical facility. Depending on when and where the stop occurs, it may be several hours before the breath or blood test occurs. Separately, if an individual has had two previous DUII convictions in the previous 10 years, any subsequent DUII offense can be charged as a felony. The two prior convictions could have occurred in Oregon or in a state with a "statutory counterpart" to Oregon's DUII laws. Enhancements also exist for manslaughter and assault involving a vehicle where the defendant has three or more previous convictions for DUII.

Senate Bill 201 A provides that an individual is guilty of DUII if that person is found to have a .08 or higher percent blood alcohol level within two hours of driving so long as the prosecution can prove the person did not drink between driving and the breath or blood test. The measure also clarifies when previous DUII convictions in other states can be used to enhance charges related to DUII and vehicle-related manslaughter and assault in Oregon.