

SB 425 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Carrier: Sen. Manning Jr

Senate Committee On Labor and Business

Action Date: 03/16/21

Action: Do pass with amendments. (Printed A-Eng.)

Vote: 5-0-0-0

Yeas: 5 - Hansell, Jama, Kennemer, Lieber, Riley

Fiscal: No fiscal impact

Revenue: No revenue impact

Prepared By: Tyler Larson, LPRO Analyst

Meeting Dates: 2/11, 3/16

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Finds and declares that telecommunicators are first responders.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Nature of emergency telecommunication work
- Barriers to recruiting and retaining emergency telecommunication workers
- Requirement to maintain qualification of PERS as qualified governmental retirement plan and trust under the Internal Revenue Code

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

Removes provisions related to Public Employees Retirement System.

BACKGROUND:

The Public Employees Retirement System (PERS) provides retirement benefits for state agencies and approximately 900 units of local government. PERS is overseen by a five-member board that appoints an executive director to manage the agency's daily operations. Oregon law requires the board to take all actions necessary to maintain qualification of PERS as a qualified government retirement plan and trust under the Internal Revenue Code.

Most PERS members are eligible for full retirement benefits after 30 years of service or at the minimum retirement age, which ranges from 58 to 65. Telecommunicators, defined as emergency communicators and public safety dispatchers, are generally eligible for full retirement benefits after 25 years of service or at the minimum retirement age of 55 for some members. Police officers and firefighters can be eligible for full benefits with less than 25 years of service and generally have the lowest minimum retirement age.

Senate Bill 425 A finds and declares that telecommunicators are first responders. Proponents testified that the finding supports national efforts to treat telecommunicators as law enforcement under a qualified government retirement plan.