

SB 404 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Education

Action Date: 03/29/21

Action: Do pass with amendments and requesting referral to Ways and Means. (Printed A-Engrossed.)

Vote: 3-2-0-0

Yeas: 3 - Dembrow, Gelser, Gorsek

Nays: 2 - Robinson, Thomsen

Fiscal: Fiscal impact issued

Revenue: No revenue impact

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Meeting Dates: 3/15, 3/29

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Requires Oregon State University Extension Service to hire five additional organic specialists to expand the Center for Small Farms and Community Food Systems by June 30, 2023. Directs Oregon Business Development Department to conduct statewide market analysis of state's organic products sector by June 30, 2023 and specifies requirements. Directs State Department of Agriculture to create certain new full-time positions by June 30, 2023. Takes effect on 91st day following adjournment sine die.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Characteristics of organic farming
- Market trends in Oregon's organic sector
- Role of Oregon State University Extension Service
- Transition from conventional to organic agriculture
- Potential fiscal impact of proposed legislation

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

Replaces the measure.

BACKGROUND:

Oregon State University (OSU) offers several local partnership programs through its Extension Service across the state. The OSU Organic Extension Program, operated through the Center for Small Farms and Community Food Systems, is one such program, which partners with local organic farmers by connecting them with specialists and academic researchers. Currently, this program has two specialist positions.

Senate Bill 404 A requires Oregon State University Extension Service to hire five additional organic specialists to expand the Center for Small Farms and Community Food Systems, directs Oregon Business Development Department to conduct a statewide market analysis of state's organic products sector, and directs the State Department of Agriculture to create certain new full-time positions by June 30, 2023.