

**HB 2498 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY**

**Carrier:** Sen. Thomsen

**Joint Committee On Transportation**

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**Action Date:** 03/25/21

**Action:** Do pass the A-Eng bill.

**Senate Vote**

**Yeas:** 5 - Beyer, Boquist, Findley, Frederick, Gorsek

**House Vote**

**Yeas:** 6 - Boshart Davis, Evans, Lewis, McLain, Nathanson, Power

**Exc:** 1 - Noble

**Fiscal:** Has minimal fiscal impact

**Revenue:** No revenue impact

**Prepared By:** Patrick Brennan, LPRO Analyst

**Meeting Dates:** 3/4, 3/25

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**WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:**

Requires application for vehicle registration to include option for applicant to include information on registration card that registered owner or operator is deaf or hard of hearing. Requires Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT), upon request of registered owner, to furnish registration card with information that registered owner or operator is deaf or hard of hearing. Requires ODOT, upon request of driver license holder, to issue driver license with information that driver is deaf or hard or hearing. Prohibits ODOT 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:**

No amendment.

**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 A creates provisions for the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) 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, as well as on the driver license or permit issued. The measure prohibits ODOT from adding restrictions on obtaining a driver license or driver permit based on the applicant being deaf or hard of hearing.