

HB 2003 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Carrier: Rep. Noble, Rep. Power

House Committee On Judiciary

Action Date: 04/13/21

Action: Do Pass.

Vote: 10-0-0-0

Yeas: 10 - Bynum, Dexter, Helm, Kropf, Lewis, Morgan, Noble, Power, Wallan, Wilde

Fiscal: No fiscal impact

Revenue: No revenue impact

Prepared By: Gillian Fischer, Counsel

Meeting Dates: 3/18, 4/6, 4/13

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Expands membership of Public Defense Services Commission from seven to nine members. Modifies qualifications of members. Modifies duties of commission. Directs commission to adopt specified policies, including policies concerning compensation, caseloads and oversight. Directs commission to report on implementation of changes to committees of Legislative Assembly related to judiciary by February 1, 2022. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Need for accountability measures provided for by amendments
- Previous measures addressing concerns with public defense contracts
- Defense services providers' positions on different proposals for consideration

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

In Oregon, the Public Defense Services Commission (PDSC) oversees Oregon Public Defense Services (OPDS) as the state agency responsible for establishing and maintaining a public defense system that provides effective defense counsel for indigent defendants in criminal proceedings, youth in delinquency proceedings, and parents and children in dependency proceedings. In 2018, the Sixth Amendment Center, a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization that provides technical assistance and evaluation services to policymakers focusing on the constitutional requirement to provide effective assistance of counsel, assessed the PDSC, OPDS, and the public defense systems they maintain. The Sixth Amendment Center recommended changes to Oregon's public defense system.

House Bill 2003 revises certain statutes relating to the Public Defense Services Commission and the Office of Public Defense Services to address some of the Sixth Amendment Center's recommendations.