

HB 2977 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care

Prepared By: Brian Nieubuurt, LPRO Analyst

Sub-Referral To: Joint Committee On Ways and Means

Meeting Dates: 2/1

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Requires the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC), in collaboration with the Oregon Health Authority (OHA), to establish grant program for distributing moneys to institutions of higher education to develop programs to prepare students to enter behavioral health workforce. Appropriates \$1,000,000 General Fund to HECC for higher education grant program. Requires HECC, in consultation with the State Workforce and Talent Development Board and OHA, to establish grant program for local workforce development boards that provide workforce programs and promote workforce development activities in the field of behavioral health. Appropriates \$5,000,000 General Fund to HECC for workforce development grant program. Requires OHA to collect and report geographic and other specified data on grant recipients. Establishes oversight council in OHA to assist in identifying and eliminating systemic barriers that influence the funding, allocation of funding, and policy choices with respect to the behavioral health workforce. Repeals oversight council on July 1, 2025.

FISCAL: May have fiscal impact, but no statement yet issued.

REVENUE: May have revenue impact, but no statement yet issued.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

In 2021, the Oregon Legislature invested \$1.35 billion in the state's behavioral health system to improve the state's behavioral health crisis system, support the implementation of Measure 110 (2020), increase access to residential treatment, and support behavioral health workforce recruitment and retention. That same year, the Legislative Assembly passed House Bill 2949, directing the Oregon Health Authority to provide incentives to increase the recruitment and retention of culturally responsive behavioral health workforce. In 2022, House Bill 4071 updated the description of individuals eligible for these incentives.

House Bill 2977 would require the Higher Education Coordinating Commission to establish grant programs for higher education institutions and workforce development boards to help develop the state's behavioral health workforce.