

SB 441 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Health Care

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Sub-Referral To: Joint Committee On Ways and Means

Meeting Dates: 1/30

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Establishes a dental care provider incentive program within the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) for the purpose of increasing recruitment and retention. Directs the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) to increase incentives within the health care provider incentive program to include dental care providers. Directs the State Workforce and Talent Development Board to create a training for dental assistants to train alongside dentists without charge. Directs the Higher Education Coordinating Commission to award grants to community colleges in Oregon to increase enrollment award scholarships in programs for dental assistants and dental hygienists. Directs the Department of Education to fund expanded programs for dental care professions. Directs OHA to adopt rules to carry out the program and gives requirements for the rules. Takes effect on 91st day following adjournment sine die.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

Providers of dental care include dentists, dental assistants, registered hygienists, and certified dental therapists in areas where people lack access to care, dental hygienists are allowed to render most services within their scope of practice without the supervision of a dentist. According to the Oregon Health Authority, there are 2,040 dentists and 466 expanded practice dental hygienists actively practicing in Oregon, and 40% of them accept Medicaid patients. OHA estimates an average of 5.8 dental care providers per 10,000 Oregonians in urban areas and 3.2 in rural and frontier areas (link to [OHA Presentation](#) dated January 18, 2023).

In 2003, the Legislative Assembly established the health care provider incentive program to provide tax credits, loan repayment, and loan forgiveness health care providers practicing in different parts of the state. Provider incentives are administered through the [Office of Rural Health](#).

Senate Bill 441 establishes and expands provider incentive programs, trainings, and scholarships available for dental care providers, including dentists, dental hygienists, and dental assistants.