

SB 423 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Education

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Meeting Dates: 2/16

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Requires faculty and nonfaculty staff members of public university governing board to be appointed as voting members. Adds faculty and nonfaculty staff members to Oregon Health and Science University (OHSU) Board of Directors, increasing OHSU board membership from 9 to 11. Requires all members of OHSU board to be voting members and prohibits faculty and nonfaculty staff members on OHSU board from participating in board actions and discussions about collective bargaining issues.

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

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

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

In 1995, the Legislative Assembly converted Oregon Health and Science University (OHSU) from a public university to a public corporation and established a board of directors. Since then, the governance structure of OHSU has remained largely unchanged, beyond changes to the number of board members, which increased from 7 to 10 in 2001 and decreased to 9 in 2015.

Prior to 2013, Oregon's other seven public universities existed under the Oregon University System (OUS) and were overseen by a chancellor. In 2013, Senate Bill 270 began to dissolve the OUS by creating individual governing boards for the University of Oregon and Portland State University, and offered the same to the other five universities (Oregon State University, Western Oregon, Eastern Oregon, Southern Oregon, and Oregon Institute of Technology). In 2015, Senate Bill 80 fully dissolved the OUS and abolished the OUS chancellor's office and the State Board of Higher Education, transferring most of its responsibilities to the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC), which was created in 2011 by Senate Bill 242. The dissolution of the OUS and the creation of institutional governing boards have yielded greater autonomy for the Oregon's public universities, particularly over financial management decisions and capital projects.

Senate Bill 854 (2021) introduced prospective changes to the public university governing boards, including:

- Adding additional student and faculty members;
- Requiring the inclusion of faculty, nonfaculty staff, and an enrolled student on the hiring committee for the president of a university;
- And requiring governing boards to designate meeting time for faculty nonfaculty staff, and student organizations and union representatives to present to the board.

While Senate Bill 854 (2021) did not pass, it began a conversation about possible reforms to public university governing boards.

Senate Bill 423 requires that members of public university boards be voting members and modifies the composition of the Oregon Health and Science University Board of Directors.