

HB 2991 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Early Childhood and Human Services

Prepared By: Matthew Perreault, LPRO Analyst

Sub-Referral To: Joint Committee On Ways and Means

Meeting Dates: 2/20

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Directs Department of Early Learning and Care (DELIC) to commission independent study that would identify barriers to a high-quality early childhood workforce and provide guidance for future professional development in the sector. Appropriates \$300,000 General Fund to DELIC to commission study. Specifies scope of study and requirements for DELIC to select research entity. Directs DELIC to convene stakeholder group to review findings of study and provide recommendations regarding compensation and career development for the early childhood workforce. Requires DELIC to submit preliminary report to interim legislative committees by September 15, 2024 and full report by December 31, 2024. Sunsets January 2, 2025. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

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:

Oregon law directs the Early Learning Division (after July 1, 2023, the Department of Early Learning and Care), in partnership with the Early Learning Council and the Educator Advancement Council, to develop and implement a system of professional development that provides early childhood professionals with career pathways, mentorship, and coaching opportunities. As part of this system, the Division maintains the [Oregon Registry](#), a centralized, statewide professional recognition database that provides educational guidelines and records individual progress on training, education, and professional development. The system is maintained by the [Oregon Center for Career Development in Childhood Care and Education](#) at Portland State University's College of Education.

The status of Oregon's early childhood system is regularly researched by Oregon State University's College of Public Health and Human Sciences. According to the [2019 report](#) on the state of the early childhood workforce, the most recent available, frequent turnover and low compensation present challenges to Oregon's stated goals of professionalizing the workforce. Each year, approximately one quarter of the early childhood workforce turns over, although those workers who remain display increased engagement in professional development. The report also found an association between lower compensation and higher turnover.

House Bill 2991 directs the Department of Early Learning and Care to commission an independent study that would identify barriers to a high-quality early childhood workforce and provide guidance for future professional development, appropriates moneys from the General Fund to the department for the study, and requires the department to convene a work group to review the study's findings and submit reports to interim legislative committees.