

HB 2405 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Judiciary

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Meeting Dates: 2/21

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Directs courts intending to dismiss charges against a defendant committed and currently located at a state mental hospital or other facility due to the defendant's lack of fitness to proceed to order the defendant be immediately transported back to the jurisdiction in which charges were initiated; provides that dismissal of charges shall take effect only upon defendant's arrival in jurisdiction in which charges were initiated.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

Pursuant to ORS 161.365, 161.367 and 161.470, in a criminal proceeding, when the court has reason to doubt a defendant's capacity to understand the proceedings against them and their capacity to assist in their defense, the court is required to determine whether the defendant has the fitness to proceed, and if not, whether there is a substantial probability that the defendant will gain or regain fitness to proceed in the foreseeable future. If the court determines it is not substantially probable that the defendant will gain or regain fitness to proceed, the court is required to dismiss all charges against the defendant and either order that the defendant be discharged or that civil commitment proceedings be initiated. In cases where the court determines that the defendant has subsequently gained or regained fitness to proceed, the court is required to resume the criminal proceedings unless it determines that doing so would be unjust, in which case the court may dismiss the charges and order that the defendant be discharged or that civil commitment proceedings be initiated. In some circumstances, when a court orders a dismissal of charges due to a defendant's lack of fitness to proceed or because resuming criminal proceedings would be unjust, the defendant is committed and currently located at a state mental hospital or other facility.

House Bill 2405 would direct a court intending to dismiss charges against a defendant who is committed and currently located at a state mental hospital or other facility due to the defendant's lack of fitness to proceed to order that the defendant be immediately transported back to the jurisdiction in which the charges were initiated. The dismissal would not take effect until the defendant arrived in the jurisdiction in which charges were initiated.