

SB 776 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Veterans, Emergency Management, Federal and World Affairs

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Sub-Referral To: Joint Committee On Ways and Means

Meeting Dates: 2/28

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Creates the Task Force on Reparations and tasks it with studying and developing proposals for financial and nonfinancial reparations for Oregonians of African-American descent. Directs Task Force to develop methods for educating the public about its findings and to recommend appropriate remedies based on findings. Sunsets December 31, 2024. Takes effect on 91st day following adjournment sine die.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

The term "reparations" refers to making amends for a wrong that one has done, by paying money or providing help to those who have been wronged. Reparations were levied on the Central Powers by the Treaty of Versailles at the end of World War I, when Germany was required to pay \$132 billion gold marks in reparations to nations to cover the cost of civilian damages among allied nations. In 1988, surviving Japanese Americans who had been incarcerated by the federal government during World War II were paid \$20,000 in reparations, along with a formal apology from President Ronald Reagan.

Senate Joint Memorial 4 (2021) urged Congress to pass House Resolution 40, which would create the Commission to Study and Develop Reparation Proposals for African Americans Act. H.R. 40 has been introduced during each congressional session since 1989, first receiving a committee vote in Congress in 2021 before expiring with the end of the 117th Congress.

Senate Bill 776 creates a 13-member Task Force on Reparations, consisting of legislators and members of advocacy groups, civil rights organizations, labor organizations, faith communities, higher education and historical research institutions, and civic and fraternal organizations. The Task Force is charged with studying and developing proposals for financial and nonfinancial reparations for Oregonians of African-American descent, as well as public education and remedies