

HB 2235 -1 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care

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Meeting Dates: 3/8

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Requires Oregon Health Authority (OHA) to study access to behavioral health treatment in rural and medically underserved area of the state and submit report to Legislative Assembly by September 15, 2024.

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

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

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

-1 **Replaces measure.** Requires OHA to convene a work group to recommend statewide behavioral health caseload standards. Specifies work group membership. Specifies caseload standards to be evaluated by work group. Requires OHA to report to Joint Committee on Ways and Means related to human services on work group's initial recommendations by January 15, 2024. Requires submission of final report by December 15, 2024. Takes effect on 91st day following adjournment sine die.

BACKGROUND:

According to Mental Health America, Oregon ranks among the worst states in prevalence of mental illness and access to care. According to the Kaiser Family Foundation, the COVID-19 pandemic and resulting economic recession has increased the prevalence of mental illness and substance use disorder, including increasing the number of adults reporting symptoms of anxiety and depressive disorder from one in ten in 2019 to four in ten in 2021.

In 2021, the Oregon legislature invested \$1.35 billion in the state's behavioral health system to improve the state's behavioral health crisis system, support the implementation of Measure 110 (2020), increase access to residential treatment, and support behavioral health workforce recruitment and retention. As the need for behavioral health services increases, so too can the caseloads of behavioral health practitioners.

House Bill 2235 would require the Oregon Health Authority to study access to behavioral health treatment in rural and medically underserved area of the state and submit report to Legislative Assembly by September 15, 2024.