

SB 58 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Natural Resources

Prepared By: Laura Kentnesse, LPRO Analyst

Meeting Dates: 3/15

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Defines 'cloud seeding' as all acts undertaken to artificially distribute or create nuclei in cloud masses for the purposes of inducing precipitation, cloud forms, or other meteorological parameters. Establishes legislative findings related to the state's water supply and cloud seeding. Requires the Oregon Water Resources Department (OWRD) to adopt rules authorizing cloud seeding programs and ensuring the water generated is distributed in accordance with Oregon water laws. Authorizes OWRD to develop or assist with developing local or statewide cloud seeding programs; contract for cloud seeding research; assess the potential for cloud seeding in the Deschutes Basin; and provide funding for cloud seeding programs in basins with water supplies insufficient to support existing uses. Requires OWRD to report to a water-related legislative committee on assessment or implementation of cloud seeding in the Deschutes Basin, if the department decides to undertake an assessment in that basin. Specifies that authorized or funded cloud seeding cannot result in legal liability for trespass or public or private nuisance or be subject to state or local permitting requirements.

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:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

Cloud seeding is a form of weather modification that aims to alter the type or amount of precipitation that falls from clouds. It is conducted by injecting chemical particles into clouds, which provides a "seed" for moisture in the air to condense and fall to the ground as rain or snow. The chemical compounds can be released into the atmosphere by aircraft or ground-based generators.

Senate Bill 58 would require the Oregon Water Resources Department to adopt rules authorizing cloud seeding programs and ensure the water generated is distributed in accordance with Oregon water laws.