

HB 2472 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Higher Education

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Meeting Dates: 2/28, 3/28

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Permits public universities' participation in interscholastic activities only if that public university implements policies, complaint process, and sanctions system to address derogatory or inappropriate speech at interscholastic activities and conducts annual survey. Requires public university employees whose official duties relate to athletics department to receive training on requirements for participation in interscholastic activities. Requires public university to respond to attendees' use of derogatory or inappropriate speech at sporting event by suspending athletic director and head coach of relevant athletic team for at least one week. Prohibits public university that fails to implement policies, complaint process, sanctions system, and annual survey from receiving state grants, state scholarship money, or support from Oregon State Police. Requires Higher Education Coordinating Commission to work with independent universities, National Collegiate Athletic Association, and professional, student, cultural, and religious organizations to develop interscholastic codes of conduct and promote their adoption. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Appropriate level of accountability
- Ability to regulate ridicule vs other forms of speech
- Safety of students and employees

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

House Bill 3409 (2019) implemented requirements in House Bill 2472, including adopting policies, a complaint process, a sanctions system, and an annual survey to address derogatory and inappropriate speech in interscholastic activities, at the school district level.

News organizations reported that at a football game between the University of Oregon (UO) and Brigham Young University (BYU) on September 17, 2022, students repeatedly chanted an anti-Mormon statement, resulting in apologies from the university, a student organization, and Gov. Kate Brown.

House Bill 2472 would require public universities to implement policies, a complaint process, and a sanctions system to address derogatory speech in interscholastic activities, and prohibit universities out of compliance from participating in interscholastic activities or receiving certain state funding and support. The bill would also require the suspension of the university athletic director and team head coach if attendees at a university sporting event engage in derogatory speech.