

SB 851 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Business and Labor

Prepared By: Erin Seiler, LPRO Analyst

Meeting Dates: 5/8, 5/10

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Requires Bureau of Labor and Industries (BOLI) to prepare model respectful workplace policy that employers may adopt. Directs BOLI to create informational materials that identify harms to employees and employers caused by workplace bullying and make materials available to employers.

Fiscal impact: Minimal

Revenue impact: No

Senate floor vote: Ayes, 23; Nays, 6--Boquist, Girod, Hayden, Linthicum, Robinson, Thatcher; Excused, 1

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Types of workplace bullying and abuse
- Effect of workplace bullying on employees
- Discretion for employers to adopt respectful workplace policy
- Process and information Bureau of Labor and Industries may utilize to prepare model respectful workplace policy
- Examples of workplace bullying and abuse

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

Oregon law establishes several unlawful employment practices. For example, it is an unlawful employment practice for an employer to discharge or intimidate an employee because of the employee's service as a juror on a jury trial or for an employer to refuse to hire a person because of a person's race or marital status. Generally, chapter 659A governs laws related to unlawful discrimination in employment. The Bureau of Labor and Industries (BOLI) is tasked with taking all necessary steps to prevent and eliminate unlawful practices. BOLI has the authority to conduct investigations and take evidence to meet this obligation. Oregon law also provides for a civil action for persons subject to an unlawful practice. In 2019, the Legislative Assembly passed the Workplace Fairness Act (WFA). The WFA, in part, requires a private employer to adopt a written policy outlining their procedures and practices for reducing or preventing discrimination and sexual assault. The WFA required BOLI to make available model procedures or policies that employers could use as guidance. Also in 2019, the Legislative Assembly passed Senate Bill 479, which applied similar requirements to public employers.

Senate Bill 851 A directs BOLI to prepare a model respectful workplace policy that employers may adopt and requires BOLI to create informational materials that identify harms to employees and employers caused by workplace bullying.