

FISCAL IMPACT OF PROPOSED LEGISLATION

Measure: HB 2137 - 6

82nd Oregon Legislative Assembly – 2023 Regular Session

Legislative Fiscal Office

Only Impacts on Original or Engrossed Versions are Considered Official

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Measure Description:

Establishes Willamette River Bridge Task Force.

Government Unit(s) Affected:

Task Force/Committee/Workgroup, Counties, Legislative Assembly, Department of Transportation, Special Districts Association of Oregon

Summary of Fiscal Impact:

Costs related to the measure may require budgetary action - See analysis.

Analysis:

HB 2137 - 6 creates the nine member Willamette River Bridge Task Force which is to conduct a study that includes exploration of strategies, including forming a special district, for the financing, construction, and maintenance of an additional bridge crossing the Willamette River connecting Marion and Polk Counties outside of the Salem-Keizer urban growth boundary. The task force is to report to an interim committee of the Legislative Assembly related to transportation no later than December 15, 2024. Members of the task force who are not members of the Legislative Assembly are not entitled to compensation or reimbursement for expenses and serve as volunteers on the task force. The bill directs the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) to provide staff support for the task force, and to gather and summarize information for the task force from prior studies related to the task force's work. The task force sunsets on December 31, 2024. The measure declares an emergency and takes effect on passage.

Legislative Assembly

The bill is expected to have a minimal impact on the Legislative Assembly. Four members of the task force will be legislative members who are entitled to per diem and travel reimbursement. Meetings are set by the chairperson and it is unknown how often the task force would meet. However, assuming that the task force meets 18 times during the approximate 18-month period until the task force sunsets, the estimated per diem and travel reimbursement costs will total \$20,100. This amount includes the Federal Insurance Contribution Act (FICA) tax, assumes the per diem remains at \$157 per day, and estimates an average mileage of 171 miles at the current rate of \$0.655 per mile. This estimate could change based on the number of meetings held. The task force would not incur additional costs to the Legislative Assembly budget if the meetings are held at the Capitol building during the Legislative Session, or scheduled task force or interim legislative days.

Although the 2023-25 Legislative Assembly budget contains funds allocated for interim committees and task forces, if the work required by this task force, or if the cumulative enactment of other legislation with interim committees and task forces exceeds expenditure levels beyond those assumed in the 2023-25 budget, additional General Fund resources may be required.

Oregon Department of Transportation

This fiscal impact statement assumes the task force will be studying potential financing options for constructing and maintaining the bridge, including the formation of a special district, and that ODOT's role is provide staff support to the task force and to review existing studies related to an additional Willamette River crossing.

Assuming this more limited role for ODOT, the cost for implementation for ODOT is anticipated to be minimal.

Costs could range from \$250,000 to \$500,000 General Fund if the intention of this measure is to have ODOT provide a more in-depth analysis of construction and maintenance strategies. If this is the case, ODOT would need to hire consultants to perform planning work related to the bridge, such as identifying possible locations, planning cost estimates, or working on environmental permitting. ODOT notes that while work has been done related to a potential third bridge within Salem, work has not been done related to a bridge outside of the Salem-Keizer urban growth boundary, so existing information related to construction and maintenance may be limited.

Other Entities

There is a minimal impact for Counties and Special Districts.