

HB 2773 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care

Action Date: 03/14/23

Action: Do pass with amendments and be referred to Ways and Means by prior reference.
(Printed A-Eng.)

Vote: 8-1-2-0

Yeas: 8 - Bowman, Conrad, Diehl, Morgan, Nelson, Nosse, Pham H, Tran

Nays: 1 - Goodwin

Exc: 2 - Dexter, Javadi

Fiscal: Fiscal impact issued

Revenue: No revenue impact

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Meeting Dates: 2/1, 3/14

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Establishes Local Public Health Incentive Subaccount in Health Care Provider Incentive Fund and appropriates \$40 million to subaccount. Requires Oregon Health Authority (OHA) to provide incentives to increase recruitment and retention of local public health professionals who can provide culturally responsive health services to underserved populations and communities. Requires OHA to increase access to services for rural and underserved communities by expanding funding to workers who are culturally competent and developing programs to increase the number of individuals entering the public health workforce. Requires OHA to develop by rule a program to award local public health professional student loan forgiveness or repayment assistance. Requires OHA to establish a program to provide grants to employees of local public health authorities who provide opportunities for students to receive training in public health and appropriates \$7 million General Fund to OHA for use in providing grants. Exempts grant moneys from definition of "compensation" for pay equity purposes. Requires OHA to study administration and effectiveness of incentive and grant programs and report to Legislative Assembly by November 1, 2026, and November 1, 2028. Requires OHA to provide notice to all local public health authorities and Legislative Assembly if subaccount funds are expected to be exhausted before July 1, 2029. Takes effect on 91st day following adjournment sine die.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Public health workforce shortages and impacts
- Benefits of investments in public health
- Importance of diversifying public health workforce
- Barriers to hiring public health professionals

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

Replaces the measure.

BACKGROUND:

Oregon's public health system includes federal, state, and local government partners, along with private organizations that work together to identify, plan for, and prevent communicable and environmental threats. In 2015, the Legislative Assembly passed House Bill 3100 modernizing the state's public health system and giving more control to local public health authorities. While the COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the need for a robust public health workforce, it simultaneously took a toll on the existing workforce as with other sectors of the health care system. In its 2021 Local Public Health Workforce Report, the Coalition of Local Health Officials (CHLO) made recommendations for how to improve recruitment and retention of local public health professionals, including addressing challenges in pay and educational opportunities.

This summary has not been adopted or officially endorsed by action of the committee.

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House Bill 2773 A requires the Oregon Health Authority to provide incentives to increase recruitment and retention of local public health professionals.