

SB 893 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY
Senate Committee On Housing and Development

Carrier: Sen. Sollman

Action Date: 03/29/23

Action: Do pass with amendments. (Printed A-Eng.)

Vote: 5-0-0-0

Yeas: 5 - Anderson, Jama, Knopp, Patterson, Sollman

Fiscal: No fiscal impact

Revenue: No revenue impact

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Meeting Dates: 3/20, 3/29

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Requires Oregon Housing and Community Services Department (OHCS) to modify state’s funding structure based on recommendations from Task Force on Homelessness and Racial Disparities. Allows creation of committees for consideration of rules and designing of policy frameworks for programs by federally recognized tribes within Oregon; community action agencies; continuums of care; and culturally specific organizations. Requires OHCS provide report to committee of Legislative Assembly related to housing on or before March 15, 2024, about implementing changes for the biennium beginning July 1, 2025, including recommendations for modifying other OHCS homeless programs as a result of the changes. Provides authority to OHCS to support or develop programs and systems intended to prevent and end homelessness, including: operation of emergency shelters and transitional housing, homeless system and services improvements, investment in data gathering, individualized and culturally responsive interventions, and programs and services designed to reduce poverty and prevent evictions. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Provisions of upcoming amendment
- Technical aspects of bill and implementation
- Recommendations of House Bill 2100 (2021) Task Force on Homelessness and Racial Disparities
- Time frame of bill deliverables

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

Replaces the measure.

BACKGROUND:

The mission of the Oregon Housing and Community Services Department (OHCS) is to provide leadership in, and review and set policy for, the development and financing of affordable housing in the state of Oregon. As the number of people experiencing or are at risk of homelessness increases, demand for OHCS services also increases, though statutory authority has not always kept up with the tasks asked of the agency. Disparities exist among the homeless population in Oregon: the Native population share of homeless counts in 2020 was four times higher than their share of the general population, while Black populations made up three times as much of the homeless population as their share of the population at-large.

House Bill 2100, enacted in 2021, directed OHCS to establish the Task Force on Homelessness and Racial Disparities to address the provision of and access to culturally responsive homeless services. The Task Force released its report in January 2022 with recommendations on ways to address racial disparities in the homeless population, more specifically, identify needs of both OHCS and housing-insecure individuals, adjust funding structures, and modify contracting processes.

SB 893 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Bill 893 A directs OHCS to modify its funding structure based on recommendations from the Task Force on Homelessness and Racial Disparities. OHCS is also directed to provide a report to a housing-related committee of the Legislative Assembly about the changes and recommended homeless program adjustments by March 15, 2024. The measure allows OHCS to design policy directed toward tribes, community action agencies, continuums of care, and culturally specific organizations, and it provides OHCS the authority to support or develop homelessness-specific programs and systems.