

HB 3171 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Carrier: Sen. Frederick

Joint Committee On Transportation

Action Date: 03/16/23

Action: Do pass.

Senate Vote

Yeas: 3 - Frederick, President Wagner, Woods

Nays: 2 - Boquist, Findley

House Vote

Yeas: 7 - Boshart Davis, Evans, Helfrich, Mannix, McLain, Nathanson, Pham K

Fiscal: No fiscal impact

Revenue: No revenue impact

Prepared By: Patrick Brennan, LPRO Analyst

Meeting Dates: 3/16, 4/25

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Specifies that information from communications made by participants and counselors as part of a peer support counseling session conducted by mass transit district personnel is to be considered confidential and undisclosable by any participant in the counseling session.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Peer-to-peer counseling background
- Transit operators' high-stress work environments
- Impact of potential disclosures on workers

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

Many transit agencies provide peer support counseling to employees in a manner similar to first responder employee counseling, to help employees manage traumatic situations encountered as part of their jobs. Exacerbated in part by the COVID-19 pandemic and other causes, violence and threats against transit workers and operators has increased over the past several years. While statute provides confidentiality protections for peer support counseling related to law enforcement agencies and emergency service providers, there are no similar confidentiality protections for mass transit district employees.

House Bill 3171 extends confidentiality protections under ORS 181A.835 from mass transit district employees to peer support counseling participants.