

Senate Bill 551

Sponsored by Senator SOLLMAN (Presession filed.)

SUMMARY

The following summary is not prepared by the sponsors of the measure and is not a part of the body thereof subject to consideration by the Legislative Assembly. It is an editor's brief statement of the essential features of the measure **as introduced**.

Requires school districts to provide specified information related to secure storage of medications and firearms. Directs Oregon Health Authority to make information available to school districts.

A BILL FOR AN ACT

1
2 Relating to secure storage information available on school district websites.

3 Whereas access to information regarding drug overdoses and the secure storage of medication
4 and firearms can help decrease the risks of related injuries and deaths by aiding parents and stu-
5 dents in their efforts to keep children and each other safe; and

6 Whereas significant increases in the ongoing student behavioral health crisis, including in-
7 creased suicide ideation and completion, require policymakers to promptly and thoughtfully consider
8 reasonable ways of limiting children's access to lethal means; and

9 Whereas in 2017 and 2018, there was a national annual average of 47,500 emergency room visits
10 for children under the age of six who had accidentally, and without supervision, ingested a
11 medication; and

12 Whereas that number of emergency room visits for accidentally ingested medications equates to
13 approximately 130 emergency room visits per day or more than five visits per hour; and

14 Whereas in 2017 and 2018, nationally there were 23 children under the age of six who were
15 hospitalized each day for an accidental unsupervised ingestion of a medication; and

16 Whereas in 2017, 84 percent of children in this country receiving emergency treatment for an
17 accidental unsupervised ingestion of medication were between one and three years of age; and

18 Whereas although the unintentional ingestion of medications can be fatal for children, regret-
19 tably, that threat is only one of many drug-related concerns plaguing families and children as opioid
20 overdoses continue to be a problem plaguing our high school children; and

21 Whereas the need for safe, secure storage applies not only to medications but also to firearms;
22 and

23 Whereas researchers estimate that one in three American families with children have at least
24 one firearm in the home, that 75 percent of children between five and 14 years of age who have
25 firearm-owning parents know where the firearms are stored, and that more than 20 percent of the
26 children with firearm-owning parents have handled a firearm in the home without their parents'
27 knowledge; and

28 Whereas the impacts of firearms on the health and safety of children is profound; and

29 Whereas an analysis of school-related gun violence incidents found that more than 85 percent
30 of school shooters obtained the firearm at home or from a friend or relative; and

31 Whereas researchers have found that more than 75 percent of firearms used in youth suicide

NOTE: Matter in **boldfaced** type in an amended section is new; matter *[italic and bracketed]* is existing law to be omitted. New sections are in **boldfaced** type.

1 attempts and unintentional injuries are stored in the residence of the victim, a relative or a friend;
2 and

3 Whereas the two age groups most likely to be both shooters and victims were youths 14 to 17
4 years of age and preschoolers five years of age or younger; and

5 Whereas firearms are a significant contributor in suicides by youth and young adults; and

6 Whereas the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic have exacerbated troubling trends with
7 children and firearms; and

8 Whereas the number of unintentional shooting deaths by children in the United States from the
9 beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, March 2020 through December 2020, was 31 percent higher
10 than the same period one year earlier which, nationally, resulted in 314 incidents of unintentional
11 shootings by children, resulting in 128 firearm deaths and 199 nonfatal firearm injuries; and

12 Whereas in recognition of the critical and ongoing need for life-saving information for items that
13 can accidentally or intentionally inflict great harm on children and families; now, therefore,

14 **Be It Enacted by the People of the State of Oregon:**

15 **SECTION 1. (1) As used in this section, “school district” means a school district, an ed-**
16 **ucation service district or a public charter school.**

17 **(2) Each school district in this state must:**

18 **(a) Provide on the school district’s website home page, and through the school district’s**
19 **social media accounts, access to information that addresses the importance of secure storage**
20 **of medications and firearms, including:**

21 **(A) The risk of substance abuse;**

22 **(B) The symptoms of an overdose and how to respond to an overdose; and**

23 **(C) Methods for ensuring secure storage of prescription drugs, over-the-counter**
24 **medications and firearms and ammunition; and**

25 **(b) Provide the information described in paragraph (a) of this subsection through com-**
26 **munications of the school district that are provided both electronically and as a hard copy**
27 **at least twice each school year.**

28 **(3) The Oregon Health Authority must ensure that the information described in sub-**
29 **section (2) of this section is available on the authority’s website and made available to school**
30 **districts.**

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