

SB 1539 -1 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Rules

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Sub-Referral To: Joint Committee On Ways and Means

Meeting Dates: 2/13, 2/15

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

The measure establishes a grant program for youth sporting events that sunsets on January 2, 2027. It declares an emergency and is effective on passage.

Detailed Summary

Directs the Oregon Tourism Commission (Commission) to develop, and coadminister with Sport Oregon, a grant program, and its application process, for local government bodies to help fund youth sporting events. Appropriates \$2,500,000 from the General Fund to the Oregon Tourism Commission for this purpose. Establishes grant recipient eligibility and the maximum award. Requires Sport Oregon to submit a report no later than December 31, 2025 to the Commission. Allows the Commission to recover the grant amount if misused. Sunsets January 2, 2027.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

-1 The amendment removes the involvement of the Oregon Tourism Commission, increases and clarifies the involvement of the Sport Oregon Foundation, and reduces the appropriation to \$1,500,000.

Detailed Summary

Appropriates \$1,500,000 to the Oregon Department of Administrative Services for the Sport Oregon Foundation. Allows grant recipients to be nonprofit organizations. Removes the maximum award cap. Requires the Sport Oregon Foundation to submit a detailed report to the Joint Committee on Ways and Means.

BACKGROUND:

The Oregon Tourism Commission (Travel Oregon) is comprised of nine members who are appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate. It was formed in 1995 and granted the status as a semi-independent agency in 2003 by the Legislative Assembly. It is funded by a 1.5% statewide transient lodging tax. Travel Oregon carries out statewide work as the official destination management organization and directly invests in the tourism industry and communities through the Regional Cooperative Tourism Program and competitive grants programs. According to its 2023 -- 2025 Strategic Biennial Plan, it aims to improve Oregonians' quality of life by strengthening the economic impact of the state's \$13.9 billion tourism industry, which employs over 117,000 Oregonians.

Sport Oregon promotes sports tourism, provides grants, and conducts programs to support youth sports activities, with an emphasis on underserved youth and increased physical activity. Sport Oregon also sponsors the Oregon Sport Awards, which recognizes the top high school athletes from across the state.