

HB 4136 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care

Action Date: 02/14/24

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

Vote: 11-0-0-0

Yeas: 11 - Bowman, Conrad, Dexter, Diehl, Goodwin, Javadi, Nelson, Nosse, Pham H, Tran, Yunker

Fiscal: Fiscal impact issued

Revenue: No revenue impact

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Meeting Dates: 2/7, 2/14

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

The measure makes changes to laws regulating the use of nonresident and temporary nurses. It requires the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) to enter an agreement with Lane County to help improve access to health care in the greater Eugene area. The measure requires OHA to review access to urgent and immediate health care services and report to the legislature by September 15, 2024.

Detailed Summary

- **Nurse Licensure (Sections 1-3)**
 - Removes assignment limitations on the use of nonresident nurses
 - Clarifies requirements for the notice that must be provided to the Oregon State Board of Nursing (OSBN) when using temporary nurses
- **Lane County Access to Health Care (Section 4 - 6)**
 - Requires the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) to enter into an agreement with Lane County Public Health for the distribution of funds to support a basic life support unit, an innovation in same-day health care in the greater Eugene area
 - Specifies requirements to be included in the agreement
 - Appropriates \$4.5 million to OHA
 - Sunsets January 2, 2026

Declares emergency, effective on passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Impacts of Eugene hospital closure
- Staffing crisis affecting hospitals

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

Removes the provision requiring OSBN to issue provisional licenses to applicants for licensure by indorsement. Clarifies required elements of the agreement between OHA and Lane County Public Health. Specifies fund appropriation purposes. Removes requirement for OHA to review and report on access to urgent and immediate health care services.

BACKGROUND:

Citing underutilization, in August 2023 PeaceHealth announced the closure of Sacred Heart Medical Center University District in Eugene, with the emergency department and inpatient rehabilitation units closing in December. For the nearly 200,000 residents of Eugene, the closure means that the nearest hospital with an

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emergency department will be PeaceHealth's Sacred Heart Medical Center at RiverBend in Springfield.

Oregon law (ORS 678.031) allows certain employers to request licensure exceptions for non-Oregon nurses in temporary staffing situations. This exception does not apply to nursing assistants. Staffing agencies and nurse applicants may not initiate the request for licensure exception. To be eligible for this exception, nurses must have an endorsement or reactivation application on file with the Board prior to approval.