

SB 474 -2 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Judiciary

Prepared By: Gillian Fischer, LPRO Analyst

Sub-Referral To: Joint Committee On Ways and Means

Meeting Dates: 2/4, 2/20

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Creates The Criminal Defense Clinical Legal Education Program within the Higher Education Coordinating Commission to train and supervise court certified law students on misdemeanor criminal cases. Establishes The Criminal Defense Clinical Legal Education Program Fund separate from the General Fund for purposes of administering the program. Takes effect July 1, 2025.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

-2 Specifies the amount of \$3,579,824 to be appropriated from the General Fund and deposited to the Criminal Defense Clinical Legal Education Program Fund established by this Act.

BACKGROUND:

In 2024 the legislature enacted House Bill 5204 which included an appropriation of \$2.1 million for distribution to the University of Oregon (\$951,236), Lewis and Clark (\$552,600) and Willamette University (\$552,600) Law Schools to provide training and supervision of court certified law students to undertake misdemeanor cases. This initiative was expected to train a combined total of 60 law students to provide public defense services for eligible defendants for between 300 to 400 misdemeanor cases and requires each law school to report annually to the Public Defense Commission on the total number of students trained, clients served, as well as the nature of the legal issues and case outcomes.

In December 2024, [during an informational meeting of the Joint Committee on Addiction and Community Safety Response](#), the Oregon law schools represented to the committee that over 160 cases had received services as part of the clinical programs created by the above appropriation and based on their current progress, were expected to provide public defense services on 450-500 cases.