

SB 581 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Education

Prepared By: Chris Bechtel, LPRO Fellow

Sub-Referral To: Joint Committee On Ways and Means

Meeting Dates: 4/7

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

The measure creates the Psychology Provider Incentive program in the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) and establishes a separate fund for the program. The measure requires the program to provide stipends to students for housing costs and licensed psychologists who completed the program can receive a loan repayment subsidy. The measure changes course curriculum requirements to include four courses on cultural competency training. The measure requires the Oregon Department of Public Safety Standards and Training to provide full-time employment to a licensed psychologist who completed the program for six to twelve months. This measure requires public employers to give preference to licensed psychologists who completed the program. The measure becomes operative on January 1, 2026, but takes effect on the 91st day after adjournment sine die.

Fiscal impact: May have fiscal impact, but no statement yet issued.

Revenue impact: May have revenue impact, but no statement yet issued.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

In 2021, the Oregon legislature invested \$1.35 billion in the state's behavioral health system. As the need for behavioral health services increases, so too can the caseloads of behavioral health practitioners, which can increase practitioner burnout and negatively impact workforce retention.

[House Bill 2235](#) required the Oregon Health Authority to convene a work group to study the major barriers to workforce recruitment and retention in the state's publicly financed behavioral health system. According to the [HB 2235 Final Report](#), the work group recommends tuition assistance and paid time for career development, and educational pursuits.