

SB 1161 -1 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Health Care

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Sub-Referral To: Joint Committee On Ways and Means

Meeting Dates: 3/25, 4/8

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

The measure directs the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) to regulate and issue licenses for the operation of organ transport vehicles. It sets licensing criteria for drivers and organ procurement organizations, mandates insurance requirements, and grants privileges such as the use of lights and sirens for organ transport vehicles.

Detailed Summary:

- Directs the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) to issue licenses for individuals to drive organ transport vehicles.
- Establishes requirements for drivers, including:
 - Must be at least 25 years old.
 - Must be a current or former police officer, firefighter, or emergency medical services provider.
 - Must have at least five years of experience operating emergency vehicles.
 - Must hold a valid driver's license and pass a criminal background check.
 - Must complete emergency vehicle operator and defensive driving courses.
- Requires organ procurement organizations to obtain a license for each organ transport vehicle they operate.
- Mandates insurance requirements for licensed organ transport vehicles.
- Grants exceptions allowing organ transport vehicles to use lights and sirens while responding to emergencies.
- Amends Oregon traffic laws to:
 - Require other drivers and pedestrians to yield to organ transport vehicles.
 - Allow organ transport vehicles to exceed speed limits and disregard certain traffic controls when responding to emergencies.
 - Require compliance with vehicle lighting and siren regulations.
- Prescribes penalties for the illegal operation of organ transport vehicles.
- Takes effect on the 91st day following adjournment sine die.

Fiscal impact: Has minimal impact.

Revenue impact: No revenue impact

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

-1 Clarifies licensing criteria, rules and fees, and operative dates of the measure.

- Requires individuals licensed to be employed or contracted by a licensed organ procurement organization to drive an organ transport vehicle.
- Permits the Oregon Health Authority to establish rules for license and renewal fees, and renewal requirements.
- Permits the Oregon Health Authority and Department of Transportation to take any necessary actions before operative date.
- Becomes operative January 1, 2027.

BACKGROUND:

Organ transport is managed by a federally designated Organ Procurement Organization (OPO). In Oregon, this role is carried out by [Cascade Life Alliance](#). The OPO connects organ donors with patients awaiting transplants and coordinates transportation through various agencies ([U.S. Organ Procurement Org Oversight](#)). Depending on the distance and type of organ, transportation may be by air or ground.

Each organ is carefully preserved using special solutions, packed on ice, and for certain organs, such as lungs and kidneys, placed on machines for transport. There is also a specific process to ensure that each organ is labeled properly. Before leaving the hospital, all organs and related documentation are scanned, and the same process is repeated once the organ reaches its destination. The Organ Procurement and Transplantation Network establishes regulations for the preservation, packaging, and labeling of organs during transport.

Senate Bill 1161 directs OHA to regulate and issue licenses for organ transport vehicles in Oregon, including driver and vehicle requirements.

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