

HB 2551 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Education

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Meeting Dates: 4/16, 4/23

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

The measure requires public university governing boards to ensure that the university requests and reviews background information, including information about disciplinary action, from the Department of Public Safety Standards and Training before appointing a special campus security officer.

HOUSE VOTE: Ayes, 55; Nays, 2

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Employment background check and disciplinary records
- History of special campus security officers
- Cost of requests to DPSST
- Permitting vs requiring background checks

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

Oregon's seven public universities are given statutory authority to establish police departments and commission sworn police officers under [ORS 352.118](#) and [ORS 352.121](#). The universities may also commission special campus security officers who have probable cause arrest authority, but are not considered police officers and may not carry firearms. The designation of special campus security officer is unique to public universities. Starting in [1987](#), the State Board of Higher Education could authorize an institution to commission special campus security officers, the total number of which were initially limited to 20 across all eight institutions (ORS 352.385). Authority to commission special campus security officers was transferred to independent public university governing boards in [Senate Bill 270 \(2013\)](#).

Police officers, including those commissioned by a university under ORS 352.121, must be certified by the Department of Public Safety Standards and Training (DPSST) under ORS 181A.490. This requirement does not apply to special campus security officers.

[Senate Bill 576 \(2019\)](#), also known as Kaylee's Law, created additional requirements for private security providers and special campus security officers employed by or contracted with institutions of higher education, including nationwide criminal records checks; distinct uniforms and designations for officers certified by DPSST and campus security officials; and psychological testing to determine fitness to serve as a special campus security officer.

House Bill 2551 would add a requirement to Kaylee's Law, codified as [ORS 181A.972](#), for public university governing boards to request and review background information, including information about disciplinary action, from DPSST before commissioning a special campus security officer. The measure does not prevent the university from commissioning or hiring a special campus security officer on the basis of the information received from DPSST.