

## SB 296 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

### Senate Committee On Health Care

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**Action Date:** 03/13/25

**Action:** Do pass with amendments. Refer to Ways and Means by prior reference. (Printed A-Eng).

**Vote:** 5-0-0-0

**Yeas:** 5 - Campos, Hayden, Linthicum, Patterson, Reynolds

**Fiscal:** Fiscal impact issued

**Revenue:** No revenue impact

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**Meeting Dates:** 2/11, 3/13

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#### WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

The measure directs the Oregon Department of Human Services (ODHS) and the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) to improve timeframes for eligibility determinations for long term services and supports (LTSS), to expand medical assistance coverage for skilled nursing and medical respite, and to study the regulatory frameworks for facilities that care for people with complex health or behavioral health needs. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

#### DETAILED SUMMARY:

##### Medicaid Eligibility Determinations for LTSS

- Directs ODHS and OHA to create a dashboard to measure the amount of time it takes to complete Medicaid eligibility determinations for LTSS.
- Directs ODHS and OHA to conduct an operational review to streamline eligibility determinations for LTSS, to include: a baseline analysis using data from the dashboard; benchmarks for improving processing times; technologies to meet those benchmarks; potential changes to staff assignments and workflows; a decision tree and protocols to use when delays occur; and exploration of payment models to provide short-term, temporary coverage while an eligibility determination is pending .
- Requires ODHS and OHA to report to the Legislative Assembly on operational review by August 15, 2026.

##### Study Options to Waive Asset Testing

- Directs agencies to seek necessary approvals and to implement policies to waive asset testing for Medicaid coverage of LTSS.
- Requires ODHS and OHA to submit progress report to the Legislative Assembly by September 30, 2026.

##### Study Regulatory Framework for Care Settings

- Directs ODHS and OHA to study the regulatory framework for adult foster homes and residential care facilities that serve seniors and persons with physical disabilities and adults with mental illness. Due back to the Legislative Assembly by August 15, 2026, the study should:
  - Identify needed changes to licensing requirements that serve seniors and persons with physical disabilities and adults with mental illness.
  - Assess the resources needed to expand enhanced care services and specific needs contracts statewide.
- Requires ODHS and OHA to submit a report to the Legislative Assembly by August 15, 2026.

##### Study Options to Increase Adult Foster Home Settings

- Directs ODHS and the Housing and Community Services Department to study opportunities to offset the cost of creating new adult foster homes and other community-based care settings and to report back to the Legislative Assembly by August 15, 2026.

##### Study Options to Expand Medical Respite and Care Coordination

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- Directs OHA and ODHS to study options to expand existing medical respite programs in partnership with CCOs and homeless service providers.
- Directs OHA and ODHS to study options to expand medical assistance to include medical respite and care services provided in shelters, seeking any necessary approvals to allow for federal financial participation.
- Directs OHA and CCOs to offer more targeted care coordination, traditional health worker support, and home modification services, including for people who are dually eligible for medical assistance and Medicare.
- Requires ODHS and OHA to submit a report to Legislative Assembly by August 15, 2026.

### Coverage of Skilled Nursing for up to 100 Days

- Directs OHA to establish a post-hospital extended care benefit to cover a medical assistance recipient's stay in skilled nursing for up to 100 days.

Declares emergency, effective on passage.

### **ISSUES DISCUSSED:**

- Inclusion of Oregon Housing and Community Services for specific purpose of studying expansion of elderly and disabled bonds program.
- Acknowledgement of Joint Task Force on Hospital Discharge Challenges and contributions of former Rep. Christine Goodwin.
- Protecting existing systems that serve people with disabilities.

### **EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:**

Replaces the measure.

### **BACKGROUND:**

[House Bill 3396](#) (2023) established the Joint Task Force on Hospital Discharge Challenge to confront the problem that people were becoming stuck in hospitals when they were unable to be discharged to an appropriate post-acute care setting. The 22-member Task Force met from September 2023 through November of 2024 to investigate agency and hospital processes, as well as structural factors constraining the capacity of the post-acute sector. At each step, the Task Force heard from a range of stakeholders.

In its [\(final report\)](#), the Task Force found that discharge challenges persist as hospitals serve an aging population with growing needs for mental health, addiction, and housing supports that the traditional post-acute care model was not designed to address. As a result, Oregon's limited hospital beds are often in use to care for people who are ready to be discharged to less intensive care settings. The care continuum is challenged at multiple points across hospitals, agencies, and community-based settings. With awareness of these interconnected challenges, the Task Force advanced recommendations as a series of linked strategies rather than a list of individual concepts.

Senate Bill 296 A implements recommendations of the Joint Task Force on Hospital Discharge Challenges, including actions to improve long term services and supports screening and benefits, to waive asset testing and cover medical respite, and to study the regulatory framework for settings that serve seniors and persons with physical disabilities and adults with mental illness.