

HB 2972 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Labor and Workplace Standards

Action Date: 03/19/25

Action: Do pass and be referred to Ways and Means by prior reference

Vote: 7-0-0-0

Yeas: 7 - Boshart Davis, Elmer, Fragala, Grayber, Munoz, Nelson, Scharf

Fiscal: Fiscal impact issued

Revenue: No revenue impact

Prepared By: Erin Seiler, LPRO Analyst

Meeting Dates: 3/3, 3/19

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

The measure appropriates \$3,000,000 General Fund to the Oregon Employment Department for staffing workforce reentry programs for adults in custody delivered through the WorkSource Oregon system. Takes effect on the 91st day following adjournment sine die.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Collaboration between Oregon Department of Corrections (DOC), Oregon Employment Department, and Oregon Workforce Partnership to bring Worksource Centers to 12 DOC institutions
- Opportunity for adults in custody (AICs) to prepare for release with access to employment-based services
- Rapid attachment to meaningful employment reduces recidivism
- Currently funded with federal grant funds that will sunset
- Personal experience
- Create a pipeline for talent in communities around the state
- Number of AICs participating

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

House Bill 2972 provides \$3,000,000 General Fund to the Oregon Employment Department (OED) for Oregon Workforce Partnership and the Oregon Department of Correction's (DOC) WorkSource Reentry Program.

For nearly two years, DOC has been collaborating with East Cascades Works, the Oregon Workforce Partnership, and the OED to implement WorkSource Centers inside every DOC prison in the state. Currently, funded through a U.S. Department of Labor Pathway Home grant, the WorkSource Centers are operated by a DOC Transition Coordinator and a dedicated, local Oregon Employment Department or local Workforce Development Board-contracted staff person.

The WorkSource Centers in DOC facilities provide adults in custody (AICs) preparing for release with access to the same state employment services used by thousands of Oregonians in the community. The employment services include work preparation service, training and education services, job search and placement assistance, financial literacy, and computer skills.

The federal grant funding is expected to end soon and the measure provides ongoing funding and permits placement of OED staff in each DOC facility to provide both institutional and community-based employment services and statewide oversight.