

SB 1579 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Judiciary

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Meeting Dates: 2/9, 2/11, 2/16

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

The measure elevates the offense severity for making a false report of child abuse from a Class A violation to a Class B misdemeanor. It makes the crime a Class A misdemeanor if the person has one prior conviction for the offense, and a Class C felony if the person has two or more prior convictions for the offense. Takes effect on the 91st day following adjournment sine die.

FISCAL: Has minimal fiscal impact.

REVENUE: Has minimal revenue impact.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Deterrence objectives
- Domestic violence dynamics

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

Under ORS 419B.016, a person commits the offense of making a false report of child abuse if, with the intent to influence a custody, parenting time, visitation or child support decision, the person: (a) makes a false report of child abuse to the Department of Human Services or a law enforcement agency, knowing that the report is false; or (b) with the intent that a public or private official make a report of child abuse to the Department of Human Services or a law enforcement agency, makes a false report of child abuse to the public or private official, knowing that the report is false. Currently, making a false report of child abuse is a Class A violation. Senate Bill 1579 is substantially similar to SB 385 A (2025) (not enacted) but it adds a definition of child abuse for the offense, and it specifies that a prior conviction counts toward penalty elevations if the conviction occurred before, on or after the measure's effective date.