

SB 1579 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Carrier: Sen. Thatcher

Senate Committee On Judiciary

Action Date: 02/16/26

Action: Do pass.

Vote: 5-1-0-0

Yea: 5 - Broadman, Manning Jr, McLane, Prozanski, Thatcher

Nays: 1 - Gelser Blouin

Fiscal: Has minimal fiscal impact

Revenue: Has minimal revenue impact

Prepared By: Tisha Pascone, LPRO Analyst

Meeting Dates: 2/9, 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. The measure takes effect on the 91st day following adjournment sine die.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Deterrence objectives
- Domestic violence dynamics

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

Under Oregon Revised Statutes 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 makes a false report of child abuse to the Oregon Department of Human Services (ODHS) or a law enforcement agency, knowing that the report is false; or with the intent that a public or private official makes a report of child abuse to ODHS or a law enforcement agency, the person 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 similar to Senate Bill 385 A (2025) (not enacted), but it adds a definition of child abuse for the offense and specifies that a prior conviction counts toward penalty elevations if the conviction occurred before, on, or after the measure's effective date.