

## **SB 283 -6 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY**

### **Senate Committee On Education**

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**Sub-Referral To:** Joint Committee On Ways and Means

**Meeting Dates:** 3/27, 4/8

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#### **WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:**

Directs Oregon Department of Education (ODE) to prepare a statement that discloses the potential health risks of wireless network technology. Directs ODE to adopt rules to offer guidance for including this information in school curricula and at school, parent, and community settings. Requires school districts and private elementary and secondary schools to distribute annually the ODE statement, as specified. Directs ODE and the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) to review peer-reviewed, independently funded studies of the biological effects of exposure to microwave radiation in schools or similar environments. Establishes review requirements. Directs ODE and OHA to develop recommendations to limit exposure. Requires ODE to adopt a policy to ensure that it will not procure or approve procurement of technologies that are uninsurable because of hazards or harmful effects. Authorizes ODE to adopt rules. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

#### **ISSUES DISCUSSED:**

- Research studies related to health implications of wireless technology
- Prevalence of wireless technology in society and in school
- Increased rate of disease, including cancer
- Federal standards for exposure limits
- Location of cell towers on school property
- Financial incentives to use wireless technology
- Commercial insurance exemptions for exposure lawsuits
- School districts' liability for exposure lawsuits
- Children's increased length of exposure
- Children's increased risk due to skull thickness
- Parental awareness and informed consent
- Availability of public schools without wireless technology
- Amending the bill to require OHA to conduct a study

#### **EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:**

-6 Replaces measure.

Requires OHA to review peer-reviewed, independently funded scientific studies on the health effects of exposure to microwave radiation, including exposure in schools or similar environments. Establishes review requirements. Requires OHA to report the review results to an interim committee of the Legislative Assembly no later than January 2, 2021. Directs ODE to develop recommendations on practices and alternative technologies to reduce students' exposure to microwave radiation, as specified. Appropriates \$10,000 from the General Fund to OHA to carry-out the review. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

#### **BACKGROUND:**

Oregon public schools serve approximately 581,000 students in 197 school districts. Oregon law directs school districts to provide opportunities for students to use technology. Oregon law also requires school districts to develop and adopt a Healthy and Safe Schools Plan. The plan must address environmental conditions at the

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facilities owned or leased by the district or school where students or staff are present on a regular basis. Senate Bill 283 directs ODE to inform schools about potential health hazards of using wireless network technology in schools and provide recommendations for minimizing exposure to possible harmful effects.

PRELIMINARY