

Measure Number: Initiative Petition 14

Subject: Unexcused Legislative Absences

Government Unit Affected: State of Oregon, local governments

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Date: June 23, 2022

Comments

The Oregon Constitution Article IV Section 15 allows the Oregon State Legislature to punish its members for disorderly conduct. That punishment can include expulsion of a member with an affirmative vote from two-thirds of that chamber’s members. Current Oregon law does not define disorderly conduct.

This initiative petition deems ten or more unexcused absences from legislative floor sessions as disorderly conduct and disqualifies any legislator with ten or more unexcused absences from holding office as a Senator or Representative for the next term after their current term is completed.

Expectations for floor session attendance are set forth in legislative chamber rule. Oregon House Rule 3.03 requires that except for emergencies, a Representative shall attend all sessions of the House unless an Excused Absence Request is filed with the Chief Clerk forty-eight hours in advance. All requests for an excused absence are approved unless the member is otherwise notified by the Speaker of the House. Oregon Senate Rule 3.10 requires attendance at all meetings of the Senate unless excused by the Senate President.

While the initiative petition anticipates barring legislators with ten or more unexcused absences from holding office for the next term, it does not require any immediate action that would give rise to a financial impact.

Fiscal Impact Summary

Executive Branch Assumptions:

Initiative Petition 14 does not provoke an immediate response after a legislator has received ten or more unexcused absences.

Local Government Assumptions:

Initiative Petition 14 does not require a local government to take an action and does not require a local government to change an existing practice.

Estimate of Financial Impact

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This measure will have no financial effect on either state or local government expenditures or revenues.