



**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY
TESTIMONY BY RICHARD J. VANGELISTI
TUESDAY, JANUARY 22, 2019**

Good afternoon Chair Williamson, Vice-Chair Gorsek, Vice-Chair Sprenger, and members of the committee.

For the record, my name is Richard Vangelisti, and I am an attorney and mediator in private practice in Portland, Oregon. I have been a member of the Oregon State Bar since 1999. I began my legal career in Oregon with Stoel Rives LLP working on business and intellectual property litigation matters. Thereafter, for approximately 15 years I represented plaintiffs in personal injury matters. Last year I opened a new practice serving as a mediator of legal disputes.

I am here today to support House Bill 2238, which amends current Oregon law to improve the way judges in Oregon are compensated.

I would like to share my own story to illustrate my support. Since I finished my term in 2014 as President of the Multnomah County Bar Association, I have been encouraged by several Multnomah County Circuit Court Judges to seek appointment to the bench. I have a strong interest in serving in a circuit court position. I discussed the opportunity with my spouse, but the annual salary of a circuit court judge would not be sufficient to support our young family with children. I have remained in private practice because of the higher income that is commensurate with my 20-plus years of legal experience.

In addition to my mediation practice, I do serve as a Judge Pro Tem and Court-Connected Mediator for the Multnomah County Circuit Court. Those positions, however, are purely voluntary without any salary.

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Judges with solid legal experience and a demonstrated temperament of respect are necessary for the integrity of our judicial system. Over the years I have worked with hundreds of clients and lawyers. Everyday citizens with legal disputes turn to our judges for reliable help. They look to our judges to ensure that their disputes are resolved in accordance with the law, with efficiency and low cost, and with respect for all parties.

I appreciate the steps that the Legislature has taken to improve judicial compensation and attract highly qualified candidates from the public and private sector. Further improvement would broaden the pool of highly qualified candidates available for service to the judiciary.

In closing, I want to express my gratitude to the Committee members for your service on the Committee. I am familiar with the personal commitment necessary to perform your vital work. In 2001, my mother, Rep. Cherryl Walker from District 51, chaired the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Civil Law.

I appreciate the opportunity to testify before you today. Thank you.

s/ Richard J. Vangelisti
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