

To those concerned:

I write this in support of limiting the amount of County Law Library funding which may be transferred for other court uses.

I am a sole practitioner in Multnomah County since 1992. I generally use the law library for legal research, access to CLEs and to provide pro bono advice regarding landlord/tenant issues to the public. I use the law library monthly often several times in the month.

Although, most legal research material is available on-line, this requires access to private for fee data bases. This would be expensive for me but would not be practical for a private party. The librarians and trained staff are incredibly knowledgeable. They are able to provide support for pro se parties seeking help with locating forms and navigating the complex world of legal research and to attorneys with more complicated problems.

These problems are not limited to family law or landlord/tenant questions.

In addition, the law libraries, provide a forum for pro se litigants to interact with the bar and trained librarians and staff. The law library's role as a public space cannot be ignored. Access to justice is not a reality to many Oregonians. The law library provides an important resource for the public to research and understand legal problems. It also provides an opportunity for members of the local bar to provide ad hoc pro bono advice.

In addition, these law libraries are repositories for more obscure treatises and sources. They provide a richness and depth to the legal research resources available. Without public law libraries, these materials would be lost to the public and most of the bar.

I strongly urge the legislature to adopt amendments safeguarding adequate funding for the public county law libraries.

Harry Ainsworth

OSB 904618

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