

HAFEZ DARAEI, IMMEDIATE
PAST PRESIDENT

JEFFREY NITSCHKE,
PRESIDENT

KATIE BAKER, PRESIDENT
ELECT



CLACKAMAS COUNTY
BAR ASSOCIATION

PO Box 852, Oregon City, OR 97045
E-mail: info@clackamas-bar.org

ALEC LAIDLAW, SECRETARY

AUBREY HOFFMAN,
TREASURER

ALEX HAYES, MEMBER-AT-
LARGE

April 1, 2019

The Honorable Jackie Winters
The Honorable Carla Piluso
Co-Chairs, Public Safety Subcommittee

Re: SB 5513, Oregon Judicial Department Budget

Dear Senator Winters and Representative Piluso:

I am writing to ask that you fully fund the Oregon Judicial Department (SB 5513).

Many people understand the role of the court in the criminal justice system, but I wanted to add some information on how it affects the Clackamas County Bar Association. Our organization comprises of lawyers from over 40 different areas of practice. Each area of practice relies on a court system which is well funded, in order to litigate cases in a fair and timely manner. While each area of practice suffers in a unique way when court resources are stretched thin, a commonality seen in all disciplines is an increase in cost to the state and to clients when courts cannot hear a case because dockets are overloaded or judges have overly-large caseloads.

Unfortunately, it is a fact that Clackamas County already has a shortage of judges in relation to the population they serve. Currently, even working at full capacity, there can be up to a 120 day delay for a hearing on a motion or trial, and there are often further set-overs due to a lack of court resources. The cost for court and attorney time inevitably flows to the state or to clients, many of whom have finite financial resources. This cost stems from the reality that attorneys have to be prepared for each hearing and witnesses have to take time off work to appear, regardless if the case is set over or not. This can cost the state and citizens thousands of dollars for each delay and delays resolution of matters often critical to those involved.

The CCBA would like to recognize the outstanding efforts of the Clackamas County Judges, the Presiding Judge, and the Clackamas court staff who work tirelessly to minimize the impact an understaffed courthouse has upon the community. However, even with these efforts, the current budget is insufficient to serve the needs of Clackamas County. To restrict the budget even further would exponentially compound the issues already faced, driving up the number and length of set overs until a matter is heard and decided.

The CCBA strongly encourages the committee to fully fund the Oregon Judicial Department as it is necessary to the protection and well-being of the public within Clackamas County. Thank you for your consideration.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jeff Nitschke", is written over a light blue circular stamp.

Clackamas County Bar Association
Jeffrey Nitschke - President