

SB 5515

Department of Justice

SB 5515 is the budget bill for the Department of Justice. The Department is responsible for general legal counsel and supervision of all legal actions in which the state is a party or has an interest. DOJ is also responsible for several other programs including child support enforcement, crime victims' compensation, consumer protection, regulation of charitable organizations, and supporting the law enforcement community.

The budget totals \$652.1 million total funds, including: \$110.9 million General Fund, \$353.6 million Other Funds, and \$187.5 million Federal Funds. The total funds budget is a 4.6% increase from the 2017-19 legislatively approved budget. The budget includes 1,448 positions and 1,416.74 FTE.

The budget includes investments in: statewide juvenile dependency representation; Victims of Crime Act funding; legal services for state agencies; the backfill of a revenue shortfall in the Division of Child Support; funding for a child support information technology project; and staff for the Division of Child Support. The Defense of Criminal Convictions is funded at forecasted caseload.

The budget includes reductions to meet statewide spending targets and to right-size the Mortgage Mediation and Tobacco Master Settlement Agreement programs. The budget eliminates 28 vacant positions.

The 2019-21 billable Attorney General rate for agencies will increase from \$182 for the 2017-19 biennium to \$214 and is estimated to generate \$229.3 million in revenue. The

rate is a 17.8% increase over the prior biennium. The increase is explained by standard budget adjustments plus the funding of one month of working capital reserve for cashflow purposes. The budget also includes policy packages that support increased demand for legal service by state agencies in the areas of business activities, natural resources, human services, transportation, housing, child support, and criminal defense. The working capital reserve is a one-time adjustment to replenish a drawn down that occurred during the 2017-19 biennium. Without adding the reserve, the increase in the rate would have been 12.1%.

The budget report includes one budget note related to limiting the agency's support of the Oregon District Attorneys Association to administrative functions and to the exclusion of all political, legislative, or lobbying activities.

The Committee approved the Department's key performance measures and updated targets, with instructions that an in-depth review be undertaken with a report back to the Legislature in 2020.

The Public Safety Subcommittee recommends SB 5515 be amended by the –1 amendment and be reported out do pass, as amended.