

**TESTIMONY ON HB 4007  
BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY  
FEBRUARY 10, 2022**

**PRESENTED BY: PHILLIP LEMMAN, DEPUTY STATE COURT ADMINISTRATOR  
OREGON JUDICIAL DEPARTMENT**

Chair Bynum, Co-Chairs Noble and Power, Members of the Committee:

I'm Phil Lemman, Deputy State Court Administrator at the Oregon Judicial Department, here to testify on the amendments to HB 4007. I want to acknowledge at the beginning of my testimony that OJD is new to the details of this conversation and is not taking a formal position at this time.

As many of you know, Chief Justice Walters has been working closely with the Public Defense Services Commission and state leaders to improve Oregon's public defense system, including developing and supporting strategies to increase the availability of public defense attorneys in all parts of the state.

Oregon has an urgent need for additional qualified attorneys to work in public defense, especially in cases involving serious felonies, and we expect that need to persist. Chief Justice Walters is grateful for Chair Bynum's interest and engagement in this conversation and is looking forward to working with her and other leaders to find effective ways to address this crisis.

In addition, circuit courts across the state have been dealing with the consequences of not having enough public defense attorneys to appoint as counsel, especially for people in custody. Courts have been working to reduce the number of pending criminal cases overall, which allows attorneys in those cases to be available for other cases.

We hope to learn more about the intent of these amendments, the role envisioned for the Judicial Department in distributing these funds, and how we can assist this committee and the legislature in advancing concepts to address this crisis.

Thank you, and I would be glad to answer questions.