

**Testimony before the Senate Judiciary Committee  
in support of HB 2325  
On behalf of the Oregon State Bar  
February 22, 2023**

Chair Prozanski and Members of the Committee:

**The Oregon State Bar** – The Oregon State Bar (OSB) is a public corporation and an instrumentality of the Oregon Supreme Court with over 15,000 active members. The mission of the OSB is to serve justice and the public interest by regulating the legal profession and improving the quality of legal services; supporting the judiciary and improving the administration of justice; and advancing a fair, inclusive and accessible justice system.

Under the direction of the Oregon Supreme Court, the bar licenses and disciplines lawyers and performs other functions to benefit the public. Bar operations are primarily funded by license fees from its members and revenue from a variety member services programs. The CEO of the bar oversees approximately 100 staff members not including the Professional Liability Fund.

**Governance** – The bar is administered by a 19-member volunteer Board of Governors. Fifteen of the members are lawyers and four are non-lawyers appointed based on their areas of interest and expertise. Attorney board members are elected by the membership from different regions to ensure geographic diversity. The OSB President is selected by the entire board from among the 15 attorney-members. The OSB House of Delegates (HOD) serves as the representative assembly of the membership, and is also elected based on geographic region. The HOD votes on proposed ethics rules, fee increases and policies. It helps set policy direction for the bar. Composed of approximately 230 delegates, the HOD meets annually.

**House Bill 2325**

HB 2325 was requested by our board in order to make a single change to the Oregon State Bar Act to allow a public member of the OSB Board of Governors to serve as OSB President. As I mentioned earlier, the OSB President is selected by the other board members. Anyone who becomes OSB President must have the support of the majority of the board.

Throughout its history the OSB has had many exceptional public members on the board whose experience and insight helped guide the bar through many difficult decisions. After the 2020 census, the Bar began a review of the current BOG districts to determine if changes were required to ensure that Oregonians are properly represented. As a part of this larger conversation, the Board discussed the bar's role in serving not just the legal community but the

public as whole. Allowing additional public participation in the leadership of the bar is another step the bar can take to be more transparent, and to build trust and confidence in lawyers and the justice system.

Thank you for your consideration of HB 2325. We happy to answer any questions.