



*The League of Women Voters of Oregon, established in 1920, is a grassroots nonpartisan political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government. We envision informed Oregonians participating in a fully accessible, responsive, and transparent government to achieve the common good. LWVOR Legislative Action is based on advocacy positions formed through studies and member consensus. The League never supports or opposes any candidate or political party.*

March 9, 2023

To: Co-Chairs Senator Sollman and Representative Evans, and Members of the Committee  
[Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee On Public Safety](#)

Re: [SB 5512](#) – Oregon Judicial Department budget bill – **Support**

SB 5512 addresses funding the cost of needed judicial services in the state of Oregon. LWVUS supports consideration based on our good governance and economic justice position: “All court procedures must meet the highest judicial standards, including guarantees of due process protections and the integrity and impartiality of the courts’ officials.” Citizen participation and access are an important part of our Judicial system position. LWVOR advocates:

Oregon should provide access to meet the diverse needs of those who use state courts. In order to improve the budget process and funding for the Oregon Judicial Department, the League supports:

- Adequate and stable funding to perform the Department’s core functions and critical services
- Funding by the Legislature of mandated programs or procedures for the state courts

The state needs appropriate judicial compensation, whoever sets it. Hiring and retention are challenging when pay is substantially less for those with similar experience, addressed with POP 111.

Oregon’s current dire shortage of public defenders is of particular concern this session. Senator Prozanski, Senate Judiciary Chair, described Oregon’s public defender crisis in December, with 80 people who were then in custody needing attorneys and another 600 people who were not in custody, also in need. We laud the varied coordination efforts to forecast needs and provide training to expand access to serve justice for Oregon’s 4.24 million populace. Services for SRL’s, self-represented litigants, noting the 93.3% satisfaction rate, is just one part. We have also supported [HB 2224](#), increasing juror compensation, addressed in this budget bill with POP 112.

The League applies a DEI lens to our work. The goal of improving services and outcomes for the underserved, vulnerable, or marginalized will surely be disproportionately more difficult without adequate funding, to echo this possible help or amplify need across our network of social services, adding far-reaching challenges if SB 5512 is not adequately funded. We support making interpretation services available to connect across languages. We underscore seeking and applying funding for online translation, given the cited 90% of content not translated and increasing litigant response to remote proceedings.

Chief Justice Wallace Carson, interviewed for our [2007 Overview of the Oregon Judiciary](#), encouraged us to work to improve pay for our judicial system workers. Fully funding these positions and supporting the system could solve our judicial labor shortage and improve many of Oregon’s judicial problems.

We urge your Support for SB 5512. Thank you for the opportunity to discuss this legislation.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rebecca L. Gladstone".

Rebecca Gladstone  
President LWVOR