



CIRCUIT COURT OF THE STATE OF OREGON
SEVENTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT
GILLIAM, HOOD RIVER, SHERMAN, WASCO, AND WHEELER COUNTIES
PO BOX 1400
511 Washington Street
The Dalles, OR 97058
541-506-2700

Karen Ostrye
Presiding Judge

John A. Olson
Circuit Judge

John A. Wolf
Circuit Judge

Marion T. Weatherford
Circuit Judge

Rian Beach
Trial Court Administrator

March 9, 2023

Dear Chair Debrow and members of the Senate Education Committee,

I am John Wolf and I am a Circuit Court Judge in Hood River, Wasco, Sherman, Gilliam and Wheeler Counties. Please note I am offering my support of SB 600 on my own behalf and not as a representative of the Oregon Judicial Department.

I am writing to ask for your support of SB600 and its funding of eviction related mediation services. The bill increases critical funding for Oregon's community dispute resolution centers. Our local center, Six Rivers Dispute Resolution Center, provides mediation and training for our communities in Hood River, Wasco, Sherman, Gilliam, and Wheeler counties. They also cover Klickitat and Skamania counties in Washington.

Six Rivers has worked with our local courts to provide mediators for our eviction dockets. The hard work of the mediators has helped connect parties to services, enabled tenants to remain in their homes and gotten landlords paid. Even in cases where tenants are unable to remain in their homes, the mediators have helped the parties reach mutually agreeable settlement terms, which benefit both parties. Their efforts have allowed the courts to focus our resources on those cases that truly need to be litigated.

Six Rivers is an important community partner that helps our courts improve services and outcomes for people who are underserved, vulnerable, or marginalized. Six Rivers also helps our courts improve access to justice by reducing barriers and enhancing service options. These goals are specific commitments in the Oregon Judicial Branch's Strategic Campaign.

Please support SB 600, to ensure that Six Rivers and other community dispute resolution centers are sustainably funded and can continue to provide their incredibly helpful mediation services for our community members. They help keep people housed and teach people how to constructively resolve problems with one another, contributing to healthier, safer, and more peaceful communities.

This funding is critical for Six Rivers to continue to provide the core mediation and training services that they do.

Please support SB600 to sustainably fund the vital community work they do so well.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John A. Wolf". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

John A. Wolf
Circuit Court Judge