

Submitter: John Haroldson
On Behalf Of: Benton County District Attorney
Committee: House Committee On Judiciary
Measure: HB2308

Chair Kropf and Members of the Committee:

As the third longest serving District Attorney in Oregon, representing the highest populated Tier II county, I want to offer my support for HB 2308. On Tuesday, March 21st, you will hear more about HB 2308's proposal to eliminates the two-tier system of pay for Elected District Attorneys.

Like judges and public defenders, Elected District Attorney compensation is determined by the State. However, unlike the judges and public defenders, District Attorneys are currently paid differently based on the population of their county. This is not in law, but rather a system relied on by the Dept. of Administrative Services where District Attorneys that represent counties with more than 100,000 people are paid more than those in less populated counties. This is an arbitrary distinction that demands an equitable response. There is no equitable difference between the work and responsibilities of the District Attorney in Benton County (population just under 100,000) and Yamhill County (population just over 100,000). In fact, when taking account for the impact of Oregon State University's non-residents and non-Benton County residents attending university events, the population number distinction is lost. For 16 years I have, for a lesser salary, performed the same character of work as many of my Tier I colleagues. The current Tier system results in an annual State compensation gap of more than \$21,000 between Tier I and Tier II District Attorneys across Oregon.

As a matter of equity and principle, I ask you to take action to eliminate the two-tiers for District Attorneys and pass HB 2308.

Respectfully,

John Haroldson
Benton County District Attorney