

Submitter: David Goldthorpe  
On Behalf Of: Malheur County  
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means  
Measure: SB5506

1. HB 2308/POP 101 – Eliminate the Two-Tiers for DA Salaries

This bill is very personal to me, since it means a lot to my career and family. The different tiers of pay seem plainly illegal in light of Oregon's equal pay law. This salary increase would recognize the difficult job that an elected DA performs and the toll this career places on a family. Since my office is small and typically staffed by young, inexperienced deputy DA's, I don't have numerous employees to hand cases to. I handle the homicides and other major crimes like child sexual assault. As a rural DA, I am on-call 24/7, since my staff are over-worked and underpaid as it is, so I believe this would be too much of a burden to place on them in their off-duty time.

Unlike elected DA's in more populace counties, I must perform ALL supervisory tasks in addition to managing a complex felony caseload. There is not another attorney I can assign to do annual evaluations, mentor new attorneys, or review clemency requests. Having worked in a larger office, I know that over 90% of an elected's daily schedule in those high population counties involves community interaction and political meetings. Rarely, if ever, is one of these DA's in the courtroom or even interacting with their own vast army of staff. Just because their job is "different", doesn't mean it is more difficult or merits different compensation. Judges in smaller counties are paid the same State salary as those in more metropolitan ones. District Attorneys should not be treated any differently. This unequal treatment needs to end.

2. HB 2054/POP 103 – Including DAs and DDAs in Police & Fire PERS

When my phone rings after hours (I am on-call 24/7), it is usually bad news. I respond in-person to violent crime scenes to assist law enforcement. The things I see there stick with me forever. To help with this, I attend many of the same coping/resiliency trainings that my law enforcement officers do. There are intersections and buildings in my hometown that I cannot drive past without seeing these violent images in my mind again as if it was the first time. I have a badge and carry a firearm for my own protection while on scene, just like my brothers and sisters serving as full-time peace officers.

It is difficult to keep people in this especially heavy field of law (prosecution) for more than 4 years. Turnover is high, and recruitment is getting more and more difficult. This law would be a step towards better treatment of these hard-working public servants. Please recognize this burden and sacrifice.

3. HB 2391A/POP 105 – Invest in DA Victim Advocates

In rural Malheur County, we are currently blessed with three victim's

advocates in the District Attorney's office. However, every two years we have to audit, explain, justify and beg to receive our grant funding to keep those positions. Their job never changes, and really only gets harder as time goes on and their emotional burdens grow. Adding the uncertainty of grant-renewal to this situation is simply cruel and makes for an even more stressful work environment. Please end (at least in part) this current cycle of application for grant funding by FINALLY fully funding these constitutionally essential positions.

Thank you for considering this crucial funding to support public safety and crime victims services across Oregon. These targeted investments will make a real difference in our community.