

## **HB 2712 -2 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY**

### **House Committee On Judiciary**

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**Prepared By:** Gillian Fischer, LPRO Analyst

**Sub-Referral To:** Joint Committee On Ways and Means

**Meeting Dates:** 3/31, 4/7

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#### **WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:**

The measure authorizes that the Oregon Judicial Department (OJD) to implement an audit schedule for the circuit courts. If an audit is conducted, the measure requires the auditor to report any violation of ethics or financial standards or conflicts of interest found to the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court within 10 days after the audit. It further requires the auditor to report the findings to the Oregon State Bar or the Commission on Judicial Fitness and Disability if appropriate. Finally, the measure requires OJD to study the role of supervised visitation specialists used for custody casework and to submit its findings to the committees of the Legislative Assembly related to the judiciary not later than March 1, 2026. Takes effect on the 91st day following adjournment sine die.

#### **ISSUES DISCUSSED:**

##### **EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:**

-2 Replaces the measure.

Amends the salaries for judges in Oregon effective July 1, 2026.

Authorizes the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court to take actions and establish rules that promote judicial accountability and fair and accessible justice services including the ability to establish education requirements; an ombudsman's office within the office of the State Court Administrator to receive and respond to comments and concerns; rules and standards governing the resolution of concerns regarding judicial performance; individualized action plans applicable to judges; and rules regarding the availability or confidentiality of information used or created by the ombudsman's office. Declares an emergency, effective on passage.

#### **BACKGROUND:**

The Oregon Judicial Branch is a unified system of state circuit courts (trial courts), appellate courts (Oregon Supreme Court and Oregon Court of Appeals), and the Tax Court, known together as the Oregon Judicial Department (OJD). The role of the state courts is to ensure that all Oregonians receive fair and accessible justice by providing due process, protecting individual rights, and preserving community welfare.

All OJD judges are elected to six-year terms in non-partisan elections. The Chief Justice of the Oregon Supreme Court is the administrative head of OJD. The Chief Justice supervises the entire state court system; issues orders and adopts rules to ensure the effective administration of OJD; adopts procedural rules for the state courts; supervises the statewide fiscal plan and budget for all Oregon state courts; and appoints the Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals, the presiding judges of the circuit courts, the presiding judge of the Tax Court, and the State Court Administrator. Oregon judicial salaries are established in statutes ORS 292.406, 292.411, 292.416 and 292.426.