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George L. Anderson
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February 6, 2025

To: Oregon Senate Judiciary Committee

Re: Senate Bill 95 – Addition of a 6th Judge to the 6th Judicial District

Dear The Honorable Chair Floyd Prozanski, Vice-Chair Thatcher, and members of the Senate Judiciary Committee

I am a member of the Oregon State Bar Association and have been since October 2020. I reside in Hermiston, Oregon, and I practice civil law. Most of my cases are in the Sixth Judicial District, which is comprised of Morrow and Umatilla Counties.

I respectfully request that the committee considers adding an additional, full time judicial position. The need is pressing.

The Sixth Judicial District has many challenges, including insufficient judicial resources, inadequate numbers of attorneys, defense and prosecution alike. These problems result in a rolling problem of unrepresented persons in criminal court; ever-increasing mental health challenge cases, with commitments and a centralized Aid & Assist docket, along with insufficient resources at the Oregon State Hospital to address our secured commitments; insufficient local treatment resources; insufficient jail space, which commonly is managing many out of area defendants in our court system; insufficient courthouses and courtrooms, and insufficient numbers of staff to manage the workload. Our challenges have led to overburdened dockets, with judges struggling to timely hear all of the cases seeking hearings or trial, and then struggling to timely prepare the written decisions critical for, among other case types, family matters. Multiple case stackings occur, in particular in criminal court with trial day sets of upwards of 10 cases for trial each at the start of the day, along with stacking in multiple courtrooms (UMA-MOR) – all against the availability of one judge.

I beg you to consider allocating sufficient resources to create an additional judicial position to help alleviate these very dire circumstances. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

ANDERSON HANSELL PC
s/Sally Anderson Hansell
Attorney at Law OSB #001934