



**Testimony of the Oregon State Bar
Support for SB 95 and SB 96
Senate Judiciary Committee
February 24, 2025**

Chair Prozanski and Members of the Committee,

The mission of the Oregon State Bar is to regulate the legal profession and improve the quality of legal services; support the judiciary and improve the administration of justice; and advance a fair, inclusive and accessible justice system.

The judicial branch is essential to the competent and effective enforcement of the rule of law, and attracting and maintaining an adequate number of judges, who are appropriately compensated, is key to the long-term health of our judicial system.

Adequate judicial salaries are crucial to attract competent lawyers to the bench, and to retain them after appointment or election. A bench with a mix of attorneys from the private and public sectors is critical in order to maintain a mix of backgrounds and experience reflective of the communities they serve. Judicial salaries must be high enough to interest and retain successful lawyers who are inclined to public service.

The Oregon Judicial Department continually monitors the workload in all of Oregon's judicial districts. We appreciate the legislature's willingness in recent sessions to add judicial positions recommended by the OJD, and encourage the legislature to do so again this year. All of the positions added in SB 95 are desperately needed, and the bar fully supports the court's recommendation.

Senate Bills 95 and 96 are both important to maintaining a strong and independent court system that can continue to protect the rights of all Oregonians. We appreciate the legislature's consideration of both of these proposals and look forward to continuing to work with our partners to protect our court system.