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**Testimony before Joint Committee of  
Ways and Means Subcommittee on  
Public Safety in support of  
House Bill 5012**

February 27, 2025

Co-Chairs Broadman and Evans, and members of the committee,

My name is Ed Harnden. I am an attorney in Portland, and I am appearing today on behalf of the Oregon Campaign for Court Funding, a group of business and nonprofit leaders as well as Oregon State Bar leaders who came together to highlight the importance of a fully funded court system to Oregon's business and nonprofit communities.

Oregon's court system serves Oregonians in a wide variety of ways. It offers safety for the public by resolving criminal cases, by providing protection for consumers and by providing a resolution to families in crisis.

Our courts also provide needed certainty for Oregon businesses, large and small. As representatives of Oregon's business community, we see every day how slowdowns in the legal process can delay new investment, new hiring, and distract businesses from their core missions. By allowing disputes to be resolved quickly and fairly, our courts allow employers to move beyond these conflicts and get Oregonians back to work.

Knowing that the court system has the resources it needs to handle all of the disputes that come before it provides confidence to Oregon business leaders that the system will be there to protect their rights when they need it.

We fully support OJD's proposal to add additional judges in several counties in need, as well as Policy Option Package 102, which would bring judicial salaries more closely in line with those of private sector attorneys with comparable experience. We would also like to express our support in OJD's funding requests related to support and training for countless judicial staff without whom our courts would be unable to function.

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The Oregon Campaign for Court Funding is committed to engaging with the legislature and the governor in a conversation about the budget for our court system. We know the legislature takes court funding very seriously, and we appreciate the work that all of you have put in to it in recent years. We look forward to continuing to talk with you about these important issues throughout this session.