



The League of Women Voters of Oregon, established in 1920, is a grassroots nonpartisan political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government. We envision informed Oregonians participating in a fully accessible, responsive, and transparent government to achieve the common good. LWVOR Legislative Action is based on advocacy positions formed through studies and member consensus. The League never supports or opposes any candidate or political party.

February 27, 2025

To: [Senator Broadman](#), Chair, [Joint Subcommittee On Public Safety](#)

Re: [HB 5012](#) – Oregon Judicial Department Budget – **Support**

The LWVOR supports HB 5012, to fund the Oregon Judicial Department needs. Our position on Oregon State Courts affirms the separation of powers and treatment of this independent branch of our state government, co-equal with the state Legislature and Executive Branch. To improve the Oregon Judicial Department budget process and funding, the League supports adequate and stable funding to perform the Department's core functions and critical services.

Our courts are a critical piece of our public safety system in many ways, as offenders are sent to jails, treatment programs, specialized housing, hospitals, or correctional facilities. During financial crises, families may turn to courts for eviction defense to maintain homes.

We call attention to several Policy Option Packages:

101 Community & Courthouse Safety, 21.16 FTE, \$6.3M GF, \$2M OF

We support POP 101 based on LWVUS good governance and economic justice positions: "All court procedures must meet the highest judicial standards, including guarantees of due process protections and the integrity and impartiality of the courts' officials." Public participation and access are important parts of our Judicial system position. Given that violence and threats are on the rise in Oregon and nationally, we echo our widespread support for improving security across numerous categories of public service, for all involved. The Governor's budget calls these "minimum security standards".

102 Judicial Compensation, \$33.3M, GF, 25-27 biennium

We consistently call attention to underfunded judicial pay, now 30% below competitive rates. This challenges hiring and retention, so we advocate for appropriate judicial compensation, whoever sets it. Chief Justice Wallace Carson, interviewed for our [2007 Overview of the Oregon Judiciary](#), encouraged us to improve pay for our judicial system workers. Improving funding for these positions and supporting the system could solve our judicial labor shortage and improve many of Oregon's judicial problems.

108 New Judges & support staff, 26.13 FTE, \$8.3M GF

The League supports funding for additional judges and circuit courts' staff, to maintain a strong state court system and address the "unrepresented crisis". Oregon citizens depend on our courts to resolve family dissolutions, treat mental health and addiction clients, divide estates, sanction offenders, and settle business disputes.

109 Consistent Technology Statewide, 19.36 FTE, \$6.9M GF

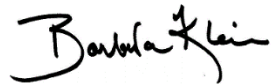
Based on our citizen participation, also privacy and cybersecurity positions, we support increasing and protecting statewide access to the 'virtual courthouse' with 24/7 online services and IT support. This improves convenience, access, and efficiency across urban and rural court users, including attorneys, and judicial system partners. Protocols must be observed to protect privacy and security for network servers, and it is crucial for victims' safety.

113 Technology Software Licensing Costs & Equipment Lifecycle Replacement – \$13.3M GF

Outdated networking systems are inefficient to operate, support, and protect from cybersecurity risks. We've heard presentations for years about dwindling support staff aging out but retained to patch and maintain "legacy" software and hardware that fewer staff are around to remember. Software patching won't address contemporary cyber threats, for example. Our trial court network routers are all at "end-of-life" in 2025. We highlight this for improved firewalls and a Public Portal Upgrade.

Individuals and families appearing in our courts are often in crisis, needing adequate attention from calm, compassionate staff and judges. We must protect and adequately provide for our buildings, technology, all the people involved, and our courts, as a branch of our government.

We urge your Support for HB 5012. Thank you for the opportunity to discuss this legislation.



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