

Submitter: James Gibson  
On Behalf Of: Judge Jim Gibson  
Committee: Senate Committee On Judiciary  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB913

Dear Chair Prozanski, Vice-Chair Thatcher, Senators Broadman, Gelser Blouin, Manning, and McLane;

Thank you for bringing Senate Bill 913 forward to a public hearing.

I am the current Justice of the Peace for Columbia County Oregon having been elected at the May 2024 Primary Election and, was appointed by Governor Kotek to begin my term early on July 31, 2024. Since the beginning of my time as Justice Court Judge I have had concerns about ORS 51.020 and how it conflicts with having Justice Court Jurisdiction on a County-Wide basis. It also disenfranchises the registered voters of our County seat, St Helens, and prevents Justice Court from utilizing County Facilities within the County seat for holding court. I was in the process of reaching out to Representatives Edwards and Javadi to ask them to consider a legislative change to ORS 51.020 when I was made aware of SB913 having been filed. I am very pleased to see the bill being presented and brought before the Senate Committee On Judiciary for consideration.

I believe SB913 will enhance the ability of Justice Courts to be a true County-Wide Court for the handling of Misdemeanor and Violation cases. I believe that these changes are long over-due and will make the statute far less confusing. Allowing all the counties to bring the County seat into the Justice Court boundaries will allow for every registered voter within the County to vote in the Justice of the Peace elections, rather than keeping them from having a say in who is elected as the Justice Court Judge. From my perspective, I see nothing but positives in making this statutory change and would strongly encourage the Committee to approve SB913 to move forward and recommend passage.

Thank you again for your time and your kind consideration of these much needed changes to ORS 51.020!

Respectfully submitted,

James "Jim" Gibson, Justice of the Peace  
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