

<b>Date:</b>	<b>March 5, 2025</b>
<b>To:</b>	Chair Kropf, Vice Chairs Chotzen and Wallan, Members of the House Judiciary Committee
<b>From:</b>	Association of Oregon Counties Legislative Affairs Manager Tim Dooley
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Opposition - HB 3376</b>

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony in opposition to HB 3376. For the record, I am Tim Dooley, testifying on behalf of the Association of Oregon Counties (AOC), representing Oregon’s county governments.

AOC acknowledges the public defense crisis is an ongoing and significant problem that requires substantial systemic reform and, as the state’s partner in governance and service delivery, is more than happy to engage in discussions about how to best allocate scarce resources towards public defense.

However, we are deeply concerned about the provisions in the base bill and the proposed -1 amendment that would require counties to bear the costs with OPDC of this new district defender system. Counties are facing substantial budget deficits and cannot absorb the mandated cost for this service that’s currently funded through OPDC.

We appreciate the proponent’s desire to improve public defense services and create a system that has effective oversight at the local level. There are many innovative and intriguing ideas in this bill, and we encourage the development of a robust workgroup involving all relevant stakeholders to continue to work on the ideas presented here today to find a solution to this problem.

Thank you for your time on this matter.

Tim Dooley

Legislative Affairs Manager for Public Safety