



VANESSA CORNWALL

Intergovernmental Relations Officer
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DATE: March 4, 2025
TO: House Committee on Emergency Management, General Government, and Veterans
FROM: Vanessa Cornwall, Lane County Intergovernmental Relations Officer
RE: HB 3369, Relating to Courthouses

Dear Chair Tran, Vice-Chairs Grayber and Lewis, and Members of the Committee:

Lane County strongly supports HB 3369, which authorizes the State Treasurer to issue Article XI-Q general obligation bonds to finance the expansion of courthouses across Oregon. As a county with a growing population and increasing demands on our judicial infrastructure, we recognize the need for investment in our courthouse facilities to ensure public safety, accessibility, and efficiency in the administration of justice.

Lane County's courthouse serves as a critical hub for our community's legal system, accommodating not only judicial proceedings, but also essential county and state services. However, our existing courthouse faces significant challenges, including:

- **Structural Deficiencies:** our current facility has seismic vulnerabilities that pose a risk to public safety in the event of an earthquake.
- **Limited Capacity:** the growing caseloads in our courts have outpaced the available space, leading to inefficiencies and delays in the judicial process.
- **Aging Infrastructure:** the courthouse needs modernization to meet current security, accessibility, and technology standards.
- **Increased Judicial Staffing needs:** under SB 95, Lane County would receive 2 new Circuit Court Judges and their staff, our courthouse will be further constrained in terms of office space, courtroom availability, and administrative resources. Without additional funding for expansion, we can't properly accommodate these much-needed judicial positions, which are essential to reducing case backlogs and improving access to justice in Lane County.

This legislation provides a fiscally responsible path forward by allowing the State Treasurer to issue bonds to fund courthouse expansions, ensuring that these critical projects can move forward without placing undue financial burdens on counties. Additionally, by addressing courthouse deficiencies through expansion rather than full replacement, this bill offers a cost-effective solution that maximizes the use of existing facilities while enhancing public safety and operational efficiency.

Lane County stands ready to partner with the state to make these necessary improvements. Passing HB 3369 will enable us to move forward with a much-needed courthouse expansion, making sure that our judicial system continues to effectively serve the people of Lane County.

ELECTRONICALLY SUBMITTED BY VANESSA CORNWALL, LANE COUNTY
INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS OFFICER