

Submitter: Inessa Worthington  
On Behalf Of: OALI  
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee  
On Public Safety  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB5031

- We support POP 104 and the increase in investigator pay, but ask that the implementation for the rate increase take effect July 2025.
- Public defense investigators are paid significantly less than what we were paid in 1985 when adjusted for inflation.
- In 1985 investigators were paid \$25/hr. The equivalent of that today is \$75/hr. We are asking only to be brought current to the same pay rate that we were paid in 1985.
- Currently we struggle to recruit and retain investigators in public defense due to the low rate. Increasing the rate will keep more investigators in state public defense, and will attract desperately needed new investigators.
- Where there are not enough investigators, attorneys must do tasks that would otherwise be done by investigators. More investigators mean that these tasks can be done for less money, and attorneys can take more cases.
- Recruiting and retaining investigators is a key component to resolving the public defense crisis in Oregon
- Delaying the rate increase by six months further delays progress toward resolving the public defense crisis. We are asking for the rate change to be implemented in July of this year.