

Elizabeth R. Lemoine
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CIRCUIT COURT OF OREGON
TWENTIETH JUDICIAL DISTRICT

Dear Chair Kropf, Vice Chairs Chotzen and Wallen and Members of the Committee:

I am submitting this written testimony in support of HB 3180 requesting \$1.25 million dollars in state matching funds for the courthouse replacement project in Washington County. I am Washington County's newest circuit court judge. I was honored and humbled to be appointed last July by Governor Kotek to fill a legislatively created 16th judicial position funded during the 2024 legislative session.

My current assignment is at the Law Enforcement Center on the criminal arraignment docket. However, as of this summer, I will join the criminal/civil team at the main courthouse. I will not have a home courtroom or chambers, but I am fortunate that my Judicial Assistant and I will be relocating between various courtrooms every two weeks. Judge Daraee, who was appointed about five months before me, has had to relocate from courtroom to courtroom much more frequently due to a lack of courtroom space.

Prior to my circuit court appointment, I served regularly as a pro tem judge in Washington County for six years. The hearings room used by our pro tem judges is not optimal. It does not have a jury box, jury room or chambers. There are no nearby rooms for parties to privately discuss resolution of cases. This is especially difficult for the substantial number of landlord tenant cases we have on a routine basis. For those cases, we have a check in process that begins in our courthouse basement, but then requires parties to go back upstairs to the first floor hearings room so that they can appear in front of the judge. Staff is required to go back and forth, upstairs and downstairs, multiple times to collect paperwork and speak to the parties. Obviously, for parties who have mobility issues, this is extremely difficult.

We need a new courthouse. We need to ensure that we are serving our community to the best of our ability. I am respectfully asking for your support for this project.

Sincerely,