



**TESTIMONY ON SB 1515
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON RULES
MARCH 2, 2026**

Chair Bowman, Vice Chairs Elmer and Pham, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Mae Lee Browning. I present this testimony on behalf of the Oregon Criminal Defense Lawyers Association (OCDLA).

OCDLA supports Senate Bill 1515. This bill addresses two important issues that arise after wrongful convictions: ensuring that people who have proven their innocence can access compensation, and creating a pathway for people convicted based on discredited forensic science to challenge their convictions.

First, the bill improves Oregon's wrongful conviction compensation process. When someone is wrongfully convicted, they lose years, often decades, of their life because of a failure in the criminal legal system. Even after a person proves their innocence, the consequences of that conviction remain: lost employment opportunities, disrupted family relationships, and profound financial hardship. SB 1515 helps ensure that individuals can meaningfully access the compensation the legislature intended to provide. This is critical to ensuring that justice is not merely symbolic, but real.

Second, the bill creates an avenue for post-conviction relief when convictions were based on forensic disciplines that have since been discredited. Over the past several decades, many forensic methods once widely accepted have now been shown to lack scientific validity. People remain incarcerated today because their convictions relied on these now-discredited techniques. SB 1515 provides a clear procedural pathway for those individuals to present that evidence and seek review of their convictions.

Wrongful convictions undermine public confidence in the justice system. Laws like SB 1515 strengthen that system by ensuring that when errors occur, there is a fair and accessible process to correct them. For these reasons, **OCDLA respectfully urges the committee to vote YES on SB 1515.**

Mae Lee Browning
Legislative Director
Oregon Criminal Defense Lawyers Association¹

¹ OCDLA's 1,200+ members statewide include public defense providers, private bar attorneys, investigators, experts, and law students. Our attorneys represent Oregon's children and parents in juvenile dependency proceedings, youth in juvenile delinquency proceedings, and adults in criminal proceedings at the trial and the appellate level, as well as civil commitment proceedings throughout the state of Oregon. Our mission is championing justice, promoting individual rights, and supporting the legal defense community through education and advocacy.