

REVENUE: No revenue impact

FISCAL: May have fiscal impact, statement not yet issued

Action: Do Pass as Amended and Be Printed Engrossed and Be Referred to the Committee on Ways and Means by Prior Reference

Vote: 5 - 0 - 2

Yeas: Atkinson, Avakian, Courtney, Morse, Monroe

Nays: 0

Exc.: Metsger, Winters

Prepared By: Marjorie Taylor, Administrator

Meeting Dates: 2/13, 3/7, 4/18

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES: Establishes salaries of judges.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Salaries of Oregon judges compared to salaries of judges in other states
- Short-term and long-term solutions to increasing judicial salaries
- Report of the Task Force for Judicial Excellence - "Judicial Compensation in Oregon: The Need for Reform"
- Ability to recruit and retain impartial and independent candidates to the bench
- Judges taking second careers to boost income
- Connection or disconnection of judge and legislator salaries

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT: Deletes disconnection of legislator and judge salaries.

BACKGROUND: The Task Force for Judicial Excellence, whose membership included business leaders, lawyers and others, was formed to address judicial compensation in Oregon. The task force stated that Judges in Oregon: are paid salaries near the bottom of all states; are paid less than first-year associate lawyers in Portland's top civil firms; are paid less than many public lawyers and less than many other public officials; and have not received a salary increase since 2002. For more than 35 years salaries for judges in the Court of Appeals, Supreme Court, Circuit Court and Oregon Tax Court have been set in statute and modified during legislative session.