

REVENUE: No revenue impact

FISCAL: Fiscal statement issued

Action:	Do Pass the A-Engrossed Measure
Vote:	5 - 0 - 0
Yeas:	Bonamici, Dingfelder, Kruse, Whitsett, Prozanski
Nays:	0
Exc.:	0
Prepared By:	Cheyenne Ross, Counsel
Meeting Dates:	5/12

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES: Allows counties with population not more than 400,000 to offer or to contract for law library services or operation of a law library using law library fees. Requires State Court Administrator to survey same and report to Legislative Assembly every two years.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Cost-efficiency, flexibility, use of improved technology
- Permit improvement or increase in services in places where current service may be substandard
- No change to funding mechanisms/structure

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT: No amendment.

BACKGROUND: Law libraries are traditionally located in courthouses. In 1981, when the responsibility for court administration changed from counties to the state judicial branch, law libraries continued as county facilities, staffed by county personnel or, for large counties, contracted-out. Their operations are funded by a percentage of court filing fees paid by litigants.

The Oregon Council of County Law Libraries received a federal grant to collect data about county law libraries and in 2010 a report issued, entitled, *Oregon's County Law Libraries*, noting broad inconsistencies in funding levels, service provision, and staffing from county to county. The report generally recommends authorizing counties to enter into agreements to permit more effective, efficient, and equitable access to legal materials.

Current law allows large counties (with populations exceeding 400,000 – Multnomah and Washington) to contract with law library associations or corporations that maintain law libraries. Some smaller counties have arrangements with other organizations, such as a nearby university or public library, to maintain a law library. House Bill 2367 A provides authority for these alternative arrangements, including the provision of law library *services*, if not the operation of a law library.