



BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

PUBLIC SERVICES BUILDING
2051 KAEN ROAD | OREGON CITY, OR 97045

April 9, 2013

The Honorable Jeff Barker, Chair
House Committee on Judiciary
900 Court St. NE, Room 331
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Letter in Support of HB 2857

Dear Chair Barker & Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the Clackamas County Board of Commissioners, I would like to express our strong support of HB 2857, which would reduce the amount payable by justice and municipal courts for deposit in the Criminal Fine Account from \$60 to \$45. This bill will help to restore revenue neutrality for local courts, which was a guiding principle of HB 2712 (2011).

HB 2712 revised the revenue and distribution structure related to criminal fines, assessments and other financial penalties imposed on convictions. One of the principles behind the legislation was that, to the extent possible, the total revenue from fines for violations should remain the same as under the previous statutory structure; in other words, the legislation should be revenue neutral.

However, justice and municipal courts in Oregon have suffered a significant drop in local revenue under HB 2712. Without restoring revenue neutrality through the passage of HB 2857, several courts will likely be forced to cut back on their caseload. Circuit courts, already strapped for resources, would be forced to pick up the slack in most Oregon counties, except at much greater cost, delay and inconvenience.

Local courts play a significant role in reducing state costs and circuit court criminal caseloads. They are also key to maintaining public safety, the quality of life and the rule of law in local communities. For these reasons, we urge your support of HB 2857.

If you have questions on this letter, please contact Clackamas County's Government Affairs Specialists, Jared Anderson (janderson@clackamas.us) or Chris Lyons (clyons@clackamas.or.us).

Sincerely,

Chair John Ludlow
On behalf of the Clackamas County Board of Commissioners