

**Testimony in Support of HB 2563
Before the House Judiciary Committee**

March 5, 2013

Good afternoon Chair Barker and members of the Committee. My name is Mike Haglund. I'm an attorney in private practice in Portland and I am currently serving as the President of the Oregon State Bar.

I am here today to express the bar's support of maintaining a strong judiciary. Keeping the judicial branch strong includes many variables, but one that is now deeply in need of attention is the matter of judicial compensation.

The judicial branch is essential to the competent and effective enforcement of the rule of law. Adequate judicial salaries are crucial to attract competent lawyers to the bench, and to retain them after appointment or election. This is especially the case for lawyers in private practice, whose salaries are generally higher than the salaries of lawyers in the public sector. A bench with a mix of attorneys from the private and public sectors is the most desirable, to maintain a mix of backgrounds and experience. While no judicial salaries anywhere in the country currently compete with those of successful private practitioners, judicial salaries must at least be high enough to interest and retain successful lawyers who are inclined to public service.

Judicial salaries are a reflection of the esteem in which we hold the judicial branch. Increasing the base salary for judges as recommended by the 2008 Public Official Compensation Commission would be a good first step in bringing judicial salaries to reasonable levels. The bar asks that you support HB 2563.