

**Testimony in Support of SB 90 and SB 635  
Before the Senate Judiciary Committee  
On behalf of the OSB Procedure & Practice Committee**

March 7, 2013

The Oregon State Bar Procedure and Practice Committee is strongly in support of the Certified Court Reporter program and of both Senate Bill 90 and Senate Bill 635.

Court reporters have historically been a very important part of the judicial process in Oregon. Having a record of judicial proceedings is important not only to the parties to that proceeding; it is an important method of demonstrating to Oregonians the competence and fairness of the judicial process in Oregon.

Although most Oregon courts have moved to the use of audio recordings of most court proceedings, having court reporter on hand is still valuable in many cases. Audio recordings are not always reliable, and in important cases having a court reporter in the courtroom to supplement any audio recording system is an appropriate and effective method of making sure that a reliable record of the proceeding exists.

Senate Bill 90 will make the Certified Shorthand Reporter program more effective and efficient by granting the State Court Administrator additional flexibility in setting certification requirement, and by allowing the Administrator discretion to set reasonable fees for administering the program.

Senate Bill 635 takes the very important step of requiring that courts appoint certified shorthand reporters for all aggravated murder proceedings. Although the number of aggravated murder cases per year in Oregon is modest, it is extremely important that a complete and accurate record of these proceedings be created. Aggravated murder proceedings are very often appealed, and when that happens it is critical that an appropriate record exist.

The modest cost of requiring court reporters has been considered by the Judicial Department, and has been included in the Chief Justice's recommended budget.

The Oregon State Bar Procedure and Practice Committee continues to believe that the use of court reporters helps to ensure accuracy and fairness in our judicial proceedings, and encourages the committee to pass Senate Bills 90 and 635.