

Chief Justice Thomas A. Balmer



Oregon Supreme Court

February 4, 2014
(SENT BY EMAIL ONLY)

The Honorable Diane Rosenbaum, Chair
Senate Committee on Rules
Oregon State Capitol Building

Re: SCR 201

Dear Senator Rosenbaum and Committee Members:

I want to thank you and the committee for recognizing both the historical significance and the architectural beauty of the Supreme Court Building in your legislative concurrent resolution commemorating its 100th year anniversary. It is the oldest state government building on the capitol mall. I am further grateful for the investment that the legislature is making in its long-term preservation. Its beauty and style as a building is still something to behold and treasure as much as I treasure it also for its functions.

As noted in your resolution, the first court hearing in the building was held on February 14, 1914, on the 55th anniversary of Oregon's statehood. In honor of this historic milestone, the Oregon Supreme Court will conduct a brief program and sponsor building tours of the building on Friday, February 14, 2014, starting at 3:00 p.m. It will be an honor for me, as the Chief Justice, to preside over this centennial celebration. I have included a copy of our announcement for this event and I hope to see you there.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Thomas A. Balmer".

Thomas A. Balmer
Chief Justice, Oregon Supreme Court

TAB:KC:ma/14eTAB002ma
Attachment

Public Invited to 100th Anniversary Celebration of Oregon Supreme Court Building

The Oregon Supreme Court will conduct a brief program and sponsor building tours of the historic Oregon Supreme Court building to celebrate the building's centennial on Friday, February 14, 2014. The Supreme Court first convened in the building on February 14, 1914, on the 55th anniversary of Oregon's statehood.

"The Oregon Supreme Court building is the oldest state government building on the Capitol mall and one of the oldest state government buildings in Oregon," said Chief Justice Thomas A. Balmer. "I hope Oregonians will visit this beautiful building and learn more about its history and the role of the courts."

The original building cost \$320,000 and was designed in the Beaux Arts style to resemble the existing State Capitol. It features an ornate, marble spiral staircase and a signature stained-glass skylight designed by Povey Brothers Art Glass Works, renowned Portland artisans who also created windows for Salem's Deepwood Estate and Elsinore Theater, and Portland's Pittock Mansion. Later renovations, including a privately-funded effort starting in 1981, added Italian silk paneling in the courtroom, carpet created from a hand-painted design, and furniture made by inmates. In 1999-2002, the library was restored to its original design. The justices' chambers were repainted and period lighting installed in 2007-2008. The 2013 Legislative Assembly approved \$4.4 million in critical repairs to the building, to secure crumbling cornices and to seal windows and other areas from water penetration.

In addition to the courtroom and chambers for the Supreme Court justices, the building also is home to the State of Oregon Law Library, a legal research resource for all Oregonians, and the appellate court records office that also hosts the courts' new electronic case management system.

A brief program will be held at 3:00 p.m. in the courtroom, followed by a reception in the building lobby, and guided tours will be available. No court proceedings will be conducted on February 14. Taking photographs is encouraged, but briefcases, backpacks, and other bags will not be permitted in the building.

A live webcast of the program will be available at <http://oregoncourts.mediasite.com>.

###