

**Statement in Support of HB 2338
On behalf of the Oregon State Bar**

February 25, 2015

The Oregon State Bar supports a fair and impartial judicial branch made up of the most well-versed lawyers available, and believes that maintaining appropriate judicial compensation is an important element in maintaining such a court.

The judicial branch is essential to the competent and effective enforcement of the rule of law. Having fair and impartial judges helps ensure the best outcomes for individuals and businesses using our courts, and helps keep overall court costs down by making sure the process runs smoothly.

Adequate judicial compensation is critical to attract the best lawyers to the bench and to retain them after appointment or election. This especially is the case for lawyers in private practice, whose salaries generally are 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 compensation at least must be high enough to interest and retain successful lawyers who are inclined to public service.

Judicial compensation is a reflection of the esteem in which we hold the judicial branch. Increasing the base compensation for judges as recommended by the 2008 Public Official Compensation Commission would be a good first step in bringing judicial salaries to appropriate levels. The bar asks that you support HB 2338.

Respectfully submitted,

Travis Prestwich
Chair, OSB Public Affairs Committee