



## OREGON BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

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### **The Oregon Business Association supports full funding of the courts in the Judicial Department's budget request in Senate Bill 5514.**

Oregon courts stand at the intersection of every important social, political and legal issue in the state. For this reason, Oregon Business Association (OBA) believes it is vital that the courts receive adequate funding in order to process cases in a just and timely manner.

OBA recognizes that tough decisions are necessary in order to balance the state budget, and that nearly every area of the state budget provides important services. However, the state court system has been reduced to the point that further cuts threaten the viability of court services.

OBA has established court funding as one of its priorities for the 2015 legislative session. Businesses rely on a stable, efficient and effective court system to resolve legal disputes that potentially impact them. Please consider the following points.

- **Courts are a critical part of an efficient and effective government.** They ensure that all government entities act within the limits of their authority, and resolve disputes in the public and private sectors.
- **Healthy courts are essential to a market economy.** Courts enforce the rules of the marketplace for businesses and consumers alike. They establish judgments to allow collection of debts, allow landlords to evict tenants for non-payment of rent, and resolve a variety of employment, contract, land use, taxation, and other disputes that affect investment and transaction of business.
- **The state needs to finish implementing Oregon eCourt.** Eleven circuit courts in Oregon (including Multnomah) are using a new electronic case management system to improve internal efficiencies and provide online access to a variety of information and services. Attorneys can electronically file pleadings, individuals and businesses can electronically receive court information, and people can pay fees and fines online. Oregon eCourt is on budget, and scheduled to be implemented statewide by June 2016.
- **Inadequately funded courts affect businesses.** State law establishes strict timelines for criminal and family law proceedings, so courts must allocate judge and staff time to meet those deadlines. These demands can jeopardize having adequate resources to timely resolve civil cases.
- **Courts are working to ensure access to justice.** Access means being able to bring your dispute to court in a manner that is affordable, safe, understandable, and timely.

### **The OBA encourages the legislature to fully fund Oregon's court system in Senate Bill 5514.**

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