

Testimony of Ruth Beyer, Senior Vice President and General Counsel
Precision Castparts Corp.
Joint Committee on Ways and Means
Subcommittee on Public Safety
Oregon State Legislature
March 5, 2015

Co-Chair Williamson and Co-Chair Shields, Members of the Committee,

I appreciate the opportunity to appear before you today.

My name is Ruth Beyer and I am Senior Vice President and General Counsel for Precision Castparts Corp.

Precision Castparts has its origins as a Southeast Portland-based division of an old Oregon company serving the timber industry. In the late 1950's and early 1960's, a young manager of that company had the idea to expand the investment casting expertise used to make chain saw cutting teeth into other fields including the booming field of aerospace. Since then, PCC has grown into a world-wide manufacturer of aerospace products for all of the major airframe and jet engine manufacturers in the US and Europe. In addition to our corporate headquarters in Portland, our operations in Oregon include seven manufacturing plants in southeast Portland and Milwaukie, and one manufacturing plant in Redmond.

We've all heard the phrase "a deal is a deal". It is a concept that is often taken for granted. Most of us expect that when we negotiate a contract or enter into an agreement, the other party will live up to its commitments, whether to deliver products or services, to lease or purchase a commercial property or to license technology.

Principles such as enforceability of contract are fundamental to the existence and success of business. PCC and other Oregon businesses rely on our court system to ensure that our contractual and trade secret rights are respected by our business partners and competitors. We also look to the courts for prompt resolution of employment, workers compensation and other matters. Businesses are often able to resolve disputes without court involvement, but when litigation does happen we need the courts to act quickly to resolve the uncertainties that impede our progress.

Oregon business and the Oregon economy rely on our courts to provide three key deliverables:

- a. A framework of predictable and enforceable commercial rules, consistently applied and resulting in well-reasoned precedent;
- b. Timely decision making when a dispute arises, to move the parties forward in the commercial relationship and to avoid the expenses associated with extended discovery and delay; and
- c. An adequate number of attorneys with civil litigation experience on the bench – especially attorneys who have had significant commercial law experience before becoming a judge. Attracting new judges with this background will require competitive pay levels, but will provide benefits that more than justify any extra cost.

Advancements such as online filing and document access and expedited dockets will also facilitate efficiency and access and are a wise investment.

Precision Castparts encourages you to adopt a judicial branch budget that will support these results. We believe it is important to Oregon business and our State.

Thank you once again for the allowing me to present PCC's views.