Oregon State Sheriffs' Association

Conservators of the Peace

Co Chairs, Members of the Committee. For the record, my name is Jason Myers, and I am the Marion County Sheriff and current president of the Oregon State Sheriffs' Association. I'm here today to testify on behalf of the Oregon State Sheriffs' Association and the Association of Oregon Counties who are in support of the Oregon Judicial Department budget. We particularly support the Policy Option Package that restores adequate funding to the local county court security funds, which were unintentional losses as a result of the passage of HB 2562 in the 2013 session.

As a matter of reference, your 36 elected Oregon Sheriffs are responsible for providing security for the circuit courts in their respective counties. The court security fund, which was established through the criminal citation unitary assessment fee, has long supported local court security operations, courthouse security improvements and other items related to the safety of our Judges, court personnel and citizens who access this core governmental service.

In Marion County, we determined that the changes from HB 2562 have resulted in an approximate $140,000 loss of revenue (from prior year averages) to our court security fund each county fiscal year. If this funding is not restored, it will require drastic changes to the level of security that is provided at our court locations in our county, as the county General Fund cannot backfill this decrease in funding without impacting other critical county services. The impact that Marion County has felt with this revenue decrease is similar in other counties across our state and is much worse for the counties in fiscal distress.

In closing, I ask for your support of the Oregon Judicial Department budget and the policy option package that restores funding to the court security fund to ensure that courts across the state run smoothly and safely.

Thank you.