

**Testimony before the Joint Committee on Ways and Means
Subcommittee on General Government
In support of SB 5509
On behalf of the Oregon State Bar Labor and Employment Section
March 4, 2015**

Co-Chairs Steiner Hayward and Smith, members of the committee:

On behalf of the Oregon State Bar's Labor and Employment Section, and its 800 lawyer-members throughout Oregon representing management, labor and administrative hearings officers, we write to you today in support of the budget request recently submitted to your committee by the Oregon Employment Relations Board (ERB).

From our understanding, ERB has eliminated its previous backlog of cases. ERB has also improved its timing on the closing of the record in a contested case and issuance of the ALJ's recommended order from 211 days in 2012 to 100 days in 2014. Similarly, the Board has gone from 132 days to issue a final order in 2012 to 49 days in 2014. Approving the proposed budget will allow ERB to sustain this great progress and hopefully increase its productivity in the upcoming years.

We especially wish to express our support for approval of funding that would create an electronic case management system. This would create an easier and more updated system with better access for all. This will also increase staff efficiencies and expedite case determinations. The creation of an electronic management system will facilitate an eventual move towards an electronic filing system which will allow constituents to file documents and make payments electronically.

The other funding request involves the re-classification of their current administrative position. The Chair currently performs the majority of the administrative duties for ERB. Re-classing the administrative position to perform the higher level duties would enable the Chair to delegate these duties. This will enable the Chair to focus on cases before ERB instead of administrative tasks.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Nathan A. S. Sykes
Chairperson

Paul M. Ostroff
Legislative Liaison