

STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY**House Committee On Judiciary****Fiscal:** Fiscal impact issued**Revenue:** No Revenue Impact**Action Date:** 02/04/16**Action:** Do Pass And Be Referred To Ways And Means By Prior Reference**Meeting Dates:** 02/04**Vote:**

Yeas: 7 - Barker, Barton, Greenlick, Lininger, Post, Sprenger, Vega Pederson

Exc: 2 - Krieger, Olson

Prepared By: Whitney Perez, Counsel**WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:**

Creates policy in Oregon to pay judges no less than median salary for judges in comparable positions in comparable states. Modifies current annual salaries for judges. Adds annual rate increases to judge salaries through January 1, 2019. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Purpose is to retain and attract qualified judges
- Oregon judges are still among lowest paid in nation
- Recognizes the importance of the judicial branch
- Effects of measure

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

The pay rate for Oregon judges is among the lowest in the nation. According to the 2011-2014 report from the Oregon Judicial Branch, salaries for Oregon judges was ranked as the 45th lowest nationally and 50th when adjusted for cost of living.

House Bill 4145 makes it the policy in Oregon to pay judges no less than the median salary for judges serving in comparable positions in comparable states. This policy is based on the need to attract and retain highly qualified individuals to serve as judges. HB 4145 also modifies the annual salaries for Supreme Court, Court of Appeals, Oregon Tax Court and circuit court judges. It then establishes annual rate increases of those salaries through January 1, 2019.