

**Testimony in Support of HB 4097
Before the House Judiciary Committee, February 8, 2018**

Chair Barker and members of the committee:

My name is Vanessa Nordyke, I'm the President of the Oregon State Bar. On behalf of the OSB Board of Governors I would like to express my support for HB 4097 to ease the burden on self-represented parties in our court system.

In 2015 the Oregon State Bar convened the Futures Task Force to look at changes facing the legal profession and steps we all need to take in order to ensure that Oregonians' legal needs are addressed in the years to come.

One major recommendation of that task force was to improve resources for self-navigators – parties who use the court to address their legal needs but who are not represented by an attorney. In the task force report last summer the recommendation was made to:

Create self-help centers in every Oregon courthouse. The Oregon State Bar and OJD should consider proposing or supporting the creation of self-help centers to assist self-navigators, including the use of dedicated and trained court staff and volunteers. The goal should be self-help centers in every court in Oregon.

We recognize that self-represented parties are not getting the help they need. Additional steps must be taken to ensure that all Oregonians can address their legal needs.

We support Multnomah County's plan to create a larger Legal Resource Center in the new downtown courthouse and are optimistic that this will help to meet a part of the unmet need for legal services that the Futures Task Force identified.

We look forward to continuing to work with the courts and the Legislature in improving the provision of legal services throughout Oregon and are happy to answer any questions you might have.

Respectfully Submitted,



Vanessa A. Nordyke
2018 OSB President