

**Testimony in Support of HB 4097  
Before the Senate Judiciary Committee, February 23, 2018**

Chair Prozanski and members of the committee:

The Oregon State Bar supports HB 4097 and the creation of legal resource centers. 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.