

## HB 4096 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

### House Committee On Judiciary

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**Action Date:** 02/08/18

**Action:** Do pass and be referred to Ways and Means by prior reference

**Vote:** 11-0-0-0

**Yeas:** 11 - Barker, Gorsek, Greenlick, Olson, Post, Power, Sanchez, Sprenger, Stark, Vial, Williamson

**Fiscal:** Fiscal impact issued

**Revenue:** No revenue impact

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#### WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Increases the annual salary for judges serving on Oregon Supreme Court, Oregon Court of Appeals, Oregon Tax Court, and Oregon circuit courts. Provides annual increase to judicial salaries for years 2018, 2019, and 2020.

#### ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Measure brings judicial salaries in line with median of judicial salaries in the 13 western states
- Many attorneys lose income when joining the bench
- Need to attract attorneys to bench
- New Mexico and Maine have lower judicial salaries than Oregon
- Prior measures to increase judicial pay

#### EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

#### BACKGROUND:

According to the National Center for State Courts (NCSC), Oregon ranks near the bottom of the 50 states for judicial salaries at all levels of courts. In particular, according to 2018 data (adjusted for cost of living), Oregon ranks 49th out of 51 jurisdictions for the salary of judges in courts of general jurisdiction, that is, circuit court judges. Nationally, the median salary for circuit court judges is \$152,000 and the average salary is \$155,000. Oregon's salary for circuit court judges is \$135,776, but lowers to \$116,787 when adjusted for cost of living.

House Bill 4096 sets a new base annual salary for judges serving in circuit courts, tax courts, the Oregon Court of Appeals, and the Oregon Supreme Court, beginning January 1, 2017. The measure also provides a yearly increase to the base salary in 2018, 2019, and 2020.