

To: Chair Jennifer Williamson
Vice-Chair Chris Gorsek
Vice-Chair Sherrie Sprenger
House Committee on Judiciary

From: Paloma Sparks, General Counsel, Oregon Business & Industry

Date: January 21, 2019

Re: HB 2238

Chair Williamson and Members of the House Committee on Judiciary:

Oregon Business & Industry (OBI) represents over 1600 businesses, advocating for a strong economy and a healthy, prosperous and competitive Oregon. OBI members have made investing in court modernization, including competitive judicial salaries, a key legislative priority for 2019.

A well-functioning judiciary is crucial for all Oregonians. Businesses throughout our state rely on effective and efficient legal processes in our courts. Ultimately, the worst thing for business is uncertainty.

Our communities rely on judges to be knowledgeable, decisive and balanced. Decisions these judges make can have the most significant impact on people's day-to-day lives. Judges regularly make the most difficult and complex decisions regarding child custody, criminal incarceration, business negotiations and housing. We believe the legislature should prioritize investing in such a crucial part of our legal system.

Oregon courts and those that rely upon the courts are disadvantaged by low pay for judges. It is hard to recruit qualified judges when pay is not competitive. Year after year, the legislature has chipped away at this problem, but we believe a comprehensive solution is needed.

OBI urges your support of HB 2238.