



BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

March 20, 2019

Representative Jennifer Williamson, Chair
House Committee on Judiciary
900 Court St. NE, H-295
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Chair Williamson:

The Deschutes County Board of Commissioners wishes to express support for House Bill 3360, which provides that bonds may be issued under Article XI-Q of the Oregon Constitution if the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court determines that remodeling, renovation or expansion of court facilities is necessary or desirable.

We are optimistic that Deschutes County will receive approval for an additional Circuit Court Judge through HB 2239, which recently moved from the House Committee on Judiciary to the Joint Ways and Means Committee. With a population increase of 45% since the last judge was added in 2003 and a corresponding increase in judicial activity, our need is great.

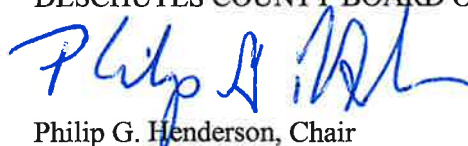
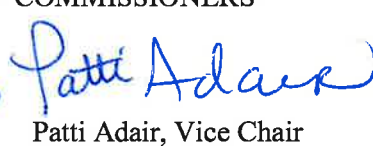
The anticipated new judge will require space to hold court. Deschutes County's court facility was constructed in 1977 and enlarged when the last judge position was added. Due to limited space available at that time, Court administrative staff was also relocated into a separate building. As a result, the facility minimally meets current space needs for services to the public, but it cannot accommodate an additional judge.

The County owns property immediately south of the existing courthouse and has developed a plan to enlarge the building for immediate and future needs. We are seeking State assistance to help fund construction of this expansion; however the proposed project does not meet the current criteria to use State bond funds. If passed, HB 3360 will address this challenge and ensure that Deschutes County's Circuit Court can continue to operate effectively.

Thank you for considering Deschutes County's position on HB 3360. If you have any questions or would like additional information, please contact Erik Kropp, Deputy County Administrator, by phone at 541-388-6584 or by email at Erik.Kropp@deschutes.org.

Sincerely,

DESCHUTES COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Philip G. Henderson, Chair

Patti Adair, Vice Chair



Anthony DeBone, Commissioner

c: Members of the House Committee on Judiciary
Senators Cliff Bentz, Tim Knopp, and Dennis Linthicum
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