



CIRCUIT COURT OF THE STATE OF OREGON

FOR LANE COUNTY  
LANE COUNTY COURTHOUSE  
125 E. 8TH AVENUE  
EUGENE, OREGON 97401-2926

Debra K. Vogt  
PRESIDING JUDGE  
(541) 682-4027

April 2, 2019

The Honorable Jackie Winters, Co-Chair  
The Honorable Carla Piluso, Co-Chair  
Ways and Means Subcommittee on Public Safety  
900 Court Street NE  
H-170 State Capitol  
Salem, OR 97301-4048

RE: Support for SB 5513 – Oregon Judicial Department Budget Bill

Dear Co-Chairs Winters and Piluso and members of the Joint Ways and Means Subcommittee on Public Safety:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony in support of SB 5513, the Oregon Judicial Department's budget bill. I would prefer to make these remarks in person, but the demands of our docket and caseload require my time and attention at the court today. In lieu of being there in person, I offer my support for the bill and want to emphasize two areas of critical concern to us locally at the Lane County Circuit Court.

First, as you know, Lane County is in dire need of a fully functional courthouse. Not only have the needs of Lane County outgrown our current courthouse, the building is not functional for a variety of key courthouse requirements, such as citizen access, inmate transportation and separation of parties. The space is inadequate, the layout is unsafe, and the building is beyond further repair or remodel. All these issues have led to inefficiencies, extraordinary costs and constant safety risks that are untenable.

In this regard, Lane County's request for \$87.6 million in state bond matching funds for courthouse construction (OCCCIF) that is included in the Chief Justice's budget is of paramount concern. You will hear testimony from Commissioner Jay Bozievich and Lane County staff regarding the state of the project. Lane County has been working hard for many years to be ready at this juncture for the next step in the process. We are ready.

Second, I also want to lend my support to the rest of the Chief Justice's budget priorities. Lane County Circuit Court hears over 33,000 cases each year. An average of 600 people per day come to our court for justice services. Last year, over 3,000 people attended court as jurors. I have attached a document demonstrating some important points about

our work. Our court serves as the seat of justice for the citizens of Lane County, but without adequate staffing, we are on the brink of reducing hours of service. Our staff is dedicated and mission driven, but having them continue to do the important work that must be done at our current staffing level is tenuous at best.

On top of the number of cases, it is important to note that the complexity of the work we do is increasing. Every day, in family law proceedings, our court encounters more self-represented citizens than ever before and provides family law facilitators to try to help them. Lane County Circuit Court offers four treatment courts that utilize evidence-based best practices to help individuals stop the cycle of recidivism and become productive members of society. We closely monitor adult guardianships and child welfare cases. All of this is being done with over 12% fewer staff than we had just 10 years ago. Despite working diligently on progress in technology and efficiency, the current staffing level is simply not sustainable and does not serve the best interests of providing justice in our community.

I appreciate your time and attention to the OJD budget bill and ask for your full support. Please feel free to contact me or our Court Administrator, Liz Rambo with questions.

Sincerely,



Debra K. Vogt  
Presiding Judge, Lane County Circuit Court

cc: Commissioner Jay Bozievich  
Alex Cuyler, Lane County Legislative Liaison  
Steve Mokrohisky, Lane County Administrator  
Phillip Lemman, Deputy State Court Administrator

## *Lane County Circuit Court Serves the Community*

**33,000+ Cases Filed Each Year** (see next page for detail)

**127,000 electronic filings** received and processed in 2018

**Four Treatment Courts** Adult Drug Court, Veteran's Court, Mental Health Court, Youth Drug Court

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### **Protecting Vulnerable Citizens**

The Court oversees and monitors **\$77 million in conservatorship assets**

1743 open **child welfare cases**

760 open **adult guardianships** (elderly people and people with disabilities)

**1732** Abuse prevention and protection orders issued in 2018

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### **Access to Justice**

Lane County Circuit Court provides family case **facilitation services to self-represented litigants**

Along with the rest of OJD, Lane provides **interpreter services** for individuals with a large variety of language needs.

**3148 citizen jurors** attended court in 2018 and others participated by taking part in juror orientation.

Lane is one of only 3 circuit courts statewide that continues to provide **public service 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.**



## 2018 Lane County Circuit Court – By the Numbers

<b>2018</b>	<b>Filed</b>	<b>Completed</b>	<b>Clearance</b>	
			<b>Rate</b>	<b>Pending</b>
<b>Civil</b>	5,305	4,860	92%	2290
<b>Landlord Tenant</b>	1,741	1,707	98%	184
<b>Small Claim</b>	6,758	7,586	112%	2389
<b>Dissolution</b>	1,474	1,482	101%	381
<b>Abuse Prevention</b>	1,732	1,691	98%	13
<b>Felony</b>	1,999	2,362	118%	853
<b>Misdemeanor</b>	1,816	1,804	99%	980
<b>Violation</b>	8,876	8,915	100%	1065
<b>Juvenile Dependency</b>	774	990	128%	1743
<b>Mental Health</b>	170	166	98%	2
<b>Probate</b>	1,019	1,022	100%	1564
<b>All Other Case Types</b>	1,578	1,675	106%	822
<b>Total Case Filings</b>	<b>33,242</b>	<b>34,260</b>	<b>103%</b>	<b>12,286</b>

Annual filed and completed numbers are by calendar year, but not all cases are filed and completed in the same calendar year.

The court always has active pending cases. The clearance rate (completed/filed) shows how well the court manages the incoming workload or reduces backlog during a calendar year.

For more information about the court, please feel free to contact court administration at (541) 682-4166, or see the OJD Statistics website at:

<https://www.courts.oregon.gov/about/pages/reports-measures.aspx>

