



The League of Women Voters of Oregon is a 99-year-old grassroots nonpartisan political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government. We envision informed Oregonians participating in a fully accessible, responsive, and transparent government to achieve the common good. LWVOR Legislative Action is based on advocacy positions formed through studies and member consensus. The League never supports or opposes any candidate or political party.

April 3, 2019

To: Ways and Means Subcommittee on Public Safety
Senator Jackie Winters, Co-Chair
Representative Carla Piluso, Co-Chair

Re: **SB 5513** – Oregon Judicial Department – **Support**

The League has a position on Oregon State Courts that affirms the separation of powers and the treatment of the Oregon Judicial Department as a separate, independent, co-equal branch of state government. As a separate branch of state government, the Judicial Department submits its biennial budget for approval to the Legislature. The Chief Justice has requested 14 new judges with support staff and an increase in judicial salaries at 75% of Federal District Court Judges.

The workload has increased in District Courts within the state but only a few new judges were added in the last biennium. The number of court staff has been restricted in past biennia, which leaves the public without assistance and a lag in entries of court documents. The requests for additional funding for judges and staff seems warranted. Grand jury recording will require more staff assistance too.

County governments have asked the state for assistance with District Court renovations and new construction projects, which have become part of the Judicial Department's budget requests. These projects and the technology in courthouses have assisted Districts in service delivery to the public. The League supports the work of the Judicial Department in providing services statewide.

The League recommends that the legislature support the Judicial Budget requests to maintain a strong Judicial system throughout the state. Thank you for the opportunity to discuss this legislation.

Handwritten signature of Norman Turrill in black ink.

Norman Turrill
LWVOR President

Handwritten signature of Karen Nibler in black ink.

Karen Nibler
LWVOR Social Policy Coordinator