

# DOUGLAS G. BECKMAN

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April 22, 2023

Chair Jason Kropf  
Vice-chair Kim Wallan  
Vice-chair Tom Andersen  
House Judiciary Committee  
Oregon Capitol  
Salem, Oregon 97301

RE: Senior Circuit Court Judge Supports SB 807

Dear Chair Kropf, Vice-Chairs Wallan and Andersen, and Committee members:

I am writing to urge your support for SB 807. The present Oregon law allows litigants such as the district attorney or public defenders office to file blanket motions to disqualify individual judges from hearing any of their cases. They need no proof of bias, only a statement they reasonably believe they cannot get a fair trial from that judge. Since it is next to impossible for the judge to prove the litigant is not of such reasonable belief, the result is to prevent that judge from hearing any of their cases.

Since at least half the cases of our courts are criminal cases, a judge who is black balled by the DA's office, for example, is unable to perform much of the work the voters elected the judge to do. **I am aware of abuses by assistant DAs who merely sent subtle hints to a judge who they either did not like or felt was not leaning more toward the interests of the state. I am one of those judges who was threatened with being black balled unless I "behaved myself."**

SB 807 would join Oregon to the vast majority of states which prevent blanket disqualifications by providing a procedure to require the litigant to establish a reasonable person would perceive the judge as biased. This will prevent the DA's office, for example, from disqualifying a particular judge for any or no reason whatsoever without stating any grounds.

Please support SB 807. Our judicial system needs it to insure judicial independence and fairness to all litigants.

Sincerely yours,



Douglas G. Beckman, Senior Judge