

January 31, 2024

Dear Chair Prozanski, Vice Chair Thatcher, and Members of the Committee:

As the Beaverton Police Detective assigned to the Family Justice Center for Washington County, I am respectfully requesting your support for \$886,528 in permanent funding for a new judicial officer, and \$1.25 million in one-time matching state funds for Washington County's Courthouse Replacement Project. Short-term, an additional judicial officer would provide relief to our judges who are struggling to keep up with oversized caseloads; long-term, we will need more courtrooms to expand our judicial workforce to meet the needs of our community members. The courthouse is also seismically unsafe, posing a serious threat to the safety of our community members in the event of a Cascadia Subduction Zone earthquake. Funding for a new judge, and our Courthouse project, will help provide badly needed relief to Washington County's justice system.

I have worked for Beaverton Police for 29 years and am grateful for the District Attorneys within Washington County who review and prosecute the cases we investigate. The lack of judges has been problematic as vulnerable, traumatized victims must be subpoenaed multiple times for trial due to resets due to lack of judges to assign cases. Victims become less participatory over time as they become even more frustrated with the court system.

As the county with the second largest population in the state, our severe lack of courtroom space and personnel has an outsized impact by delaying access to justice for thousands of people. The Oregon Judicial Department (OJD) has analyzed the number of case filings for each case type in our county, and they determined that we need four additional judges to be able to meet our current needs. The county has identified a space they can use if the state grants one additional judge, but they unfortunately do not have enough space in our court facilities for four more judges. As it stands, these facilities are jam-packed with victims, defendants and attorneys who are often talking in the hallways because there is not enough meeting room space for them to have conversations in private. For those who have trauma associated with their cases, being crammed into close quarters with a person who inflicted that trauma on them can be very harmful.

As a public safety leader in Washington County, I would greatly appreciate your support in securing state funding to expand the county's judicial capacity with an additional judgeship and a new courthouse.

Respectfully,

Amanda Pickar Detective, Beaverton Police Department