

OREGON TRIAL LAWYERS ASSOCIATION

812 SW Washington Street, #900

Portland, OR 97205

www.oregontriallawyers.org

503-799-1017

Testimony of Arthur Towers

OTLA Political Director

In Support of Senate Bill 1541

Before the Senate Committee on Judiciary

February 6, 2024

Chair Prozanski, Vice Chair Thatcher, members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of SB 1541, which would expand access to justice in Washington, Clackamas, and Jackson Counties.

Justice delayed is justice denied. OTLA members represent workers who have suffered from wage theft or retaliation, defrauded consumers, Oregonians who have suffered from discrimination, and seriously injured Oregonians.

These plaintiffs are often of modest means and are seeking financial compensation from some of the most powerful interests in society. Delays at the courthouse add to the pressure for people who have been wronged to accept settlement offers that are far less than they are owed. The financial stress of medical bills, the loss of a paycheck, or the loss from fraud is exacerbated by bottlenecks in the legal process.

The backlogs in the criminal docket frequently make the news, but delays in civil cases are also of great concern.

Senate Bill 1541 would add three judicial positions in counties with growing populations and pressing need. We urge your support for SB 1541. Thank you for your consideration.