



STATE OF OREGON
LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL COMMITTEE

October 24, 2025

Senator Kate Lieber, Cochair
Joint Interim Committee on Ways and Means
900 Court Street NE S205
Salem OR 97301

Representative Tawna Sanchez, Cochair
Joint Interim Committee on Ways and Means
900 Court Street NE H273
Salem OR 97301

Re: Legislative Counsel's 2025-2027 Reduction Options

Dear Cochairs Lieber and Sanchez,

This letter serves as the Office of the Legislative Counsel's response to the October 1, 2025, request of the Legislative Fiscal Office for agency reduction options for the 2025-2027 biennium.

Mission statement

Overseen by the Legislative Counsel Committee, the Office of the Legislative Counsel provides legal and publication services to the Legislative Assembly and its members and other agencies of state government. Legislative Counsel drafts measures and amendments for legislators, legislative committees and state agencies; provides legal advice to legislators and legislative committees; reviews state agency rules for legal sufficiency; prepares indexes and tables for legislative publications; and edits, publishes, sells and distributes the Oregon Revised Statutes, the official bound session laws and other print and electronic publications.

Budget overview

Legislative Counsel's budget consists of three principal programs: the General Program, the Oregon Revised Statutes (ORS) Publications Program and the Legislative Publications Program.

The General Program consists of drafting measures and amendments for legislators and legislative committees, performing legal research and writing opinions for legislators and legislative committees, providing committee testimony and floor session support to members, answering legal questions from members and legislative staff and providing general counsel services like public records request processing and contract review. The General Program includes drafting services that are provided to executive and judicial branch agencies during limited periods of time during the two-year legislative cycle. Pursuant to ORS 173.130, Legislative

Counsel charges officers and agencies of executive and judicial branches for drafting services. Finally, pursuant to ORS 183.710 to 183.730, Legislative Counsel reviews all newly adopted or amended administrative rules for legal sufficiency.

The ORS Publications Program covers the editing, preparation, printing, sale and distribution of the *Oregon Revised Statutes*, including an annotations volume and even-year supplement, and five specialty publications.¹ All proceeds from sales of ORS materials are deposited in the ORS Revolving Account and continuously appropriated for publication and distribution of ORS. Any unexpended and unobligated balance in the ORS Revolving Account in excess of \$500,000 as of July 1 of any odd-numbered year is transferred from the account to the General Fund to be available for general governmental expenditures. On July 1, 2025, the balance of the ORS Revolving Account was \$522,549.²

The Legislative Publications Program covers the publication and distribution of the hardbound and constitutionally mandated *Oregon Laws*, which serves as the permanent official record of legislative enactments.³

Legislative Counsel's 2025-2027 legislatively adopted budget totals \$25,865,208 for all funds:

\$22,454,653	General Fund
\$729,634	Other Funds Non-Limited
\$2,680,921	Other Funds Limited

Legislative Counsel reduction options

As reflected in our mission, Legislative Counsel is an organization that strives to provide excellent client service, most typically in the form of drafting services and legal opinion research and writing provided to members and committees of the Legislative Assembly. Preserving the capability to perform these core services with the high-quality standards and high-speed responsiveness expected of us by the Legislative Assembly is our central objective in identifying specific reduction options. We note that legislative and judicial branch agencies are legally required to retain any remaining General Fund balances, typically referred to as reversions, from the previous biennium for the payment of expenses for the next biennium. To mitigate the impact of General Fund reductions on core services and positions, Legislative Counsel joins with other legislative branch agencies in prioritizing the use of these anticipated reversions from the 2023-2025 biennium to help achieve the reduction targets.

For the 2023-2025 biennium, Legislative Counsel is projected to have a remaining General Fund appropriation totaling \$1,830,120. However, \$1,100,146 has been used to support budget adjustments in the 2025-2027 legislatively adopted budget. A portion of the remaining reversion balance would be used to meet a 2.5 percent reduction target of \$561,366. To meet a 5 percent reduction target of \$1,122,733, the entire 2023-2025 projected reversion balance would be used, as well as a reduction in services and supplies, vacancy savings and personal services.

¹ The specialty publications are based on subject matter and consist of: *Criminal Code of Oregon*; *Family Laws of Oregon*; *Landlord and Tenant Laws of Oregon*; *Labor, Employment and Workers' Compensation Laws of Oregon*; and *Essential Rules for Oregon Courts*.

² ORS 171.275 to 171.325.

³ ORS 171.236 to 171.270.

The ORS Publications Program is dedicated to the printing and distribution of the *Oregon Revised Statutes* and specialty publications. The Legislative Counsel Committee could decide to transfer amounts to the General Fund that the committee considers “unnecessary for use in publishing and distributing future editions or publications.”⁴ The Legislative Publications Program does not contain a similar exception and would require a statutory change to make a reduction to the program.⁵

Other Funds Limited reductions would come from the General Program’s Drafting Services subprogram. To meet a 2.5 percent reduction target of \$67,023, vacancy savings, temporary appointments and services and supplies would be utilized. To meet a 5 percent reduction target of \$134,046, a further reduction to temporary appointments would be utilized.

Other considerations

Although reductions to services and supplies would limit Legislative Counsel’s ability to address unanticipated costs, the reductions noted are not expected to impact the office’s core program and services. The programs and services that Legislative Counsel provides do not duplicate any programs or services provided by any other state agency. Finally, there is no new or expanded program or service being performed by Legislative Counsel that was established on or after July 1, 2021.

Very truly yours,



Dexter A. Johnson
Legislative Counsel

att.: reduction options form

c: Amanda Beitel, Legislative Fiscal Officer
John Terpening, Deputy Legislative Fiscal Officer

⁴ ORS 171.305 (3).

⁵ ORS 171.245.

Legislative Counsel Committee (LC)																
2025-2027 Biennium																
2025-2027 LAB				22,454,653	-	2,680,921	729,634	-	-	25,865,208						
Detail of Reductions to 2025-2027 Legislatively Adopted Budget																
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
Priority (ranked most to least preferred)	Agency	SCR or Activity Initials	Program Unit/Activity Description	GF	LF	OF	NL-OF	FF	NL-FF	TOTAL FUNDS	Pos.	FTE	Gov. Reduction Target Yes / No	One-Time Yes / No	Describe the reduction and associated impact on services and outcomes. Please identify the source of Other Funds reductions.	
																Dept
1	1-GF	LC	14200-001	2023-2025 General Fund Reversions	561,366	-	-	-	-	-	\$ 561,366	-	0.00	NA	Yes	Statute allows legislative branch agencies to retain unspent General Fund. LC is projected to have General Fund totaling \$1,830,120 from the 2023-25 biennium; however, \$1,100,146 was utilized to support budget adjustments in the 2025-27 legislatively adopted budget. The remaining \$729,974 is available and would be utilized to meet a 2.5% reduction target of \$561,366.
2	2-GF	LC	14200-001	2023-2025 General Fund Reversions	168,608	-	-	-	-	-	\$ 168,608	-	0.00	NA	Yes	The remaining balance of 2023-25 unspent General Fund would be utilized to meet a total 3.25% reduction.
3	3-GF	LC	14200-001	Services and Supplies	206,003	-	-	-	-	-	\$ 206,003	-	0.00	NA	No	A \$206,003 reduction in services and supplies brings total General Fund reductions to 4.17%. Services and supplies reductions limit LC's ability to address unanticipated costs, but should not impact services and outcomes.
4	4-GF 1-OF	LC	14200-001	Vacancy Savings	79,419	-	26,473	-	-	-	\$ 105,892	-	0.00	NA	Yes	LC's Senior Editor/Analyst position is currently vacant and not anticipated to be filled until February 2026. The position is budgeted as 75% General Fund and 25% Other Funds. This reduction brings the GF reduction total to 4.52%. The Other Funds for this position are supported through the charges to state agencies and elected officials for legislative drafting services. This reduction brings the Other Funds reduction to .99%.
5	5-GF 2-OF	LC	14200-001	Personal Services and OPE Temporary Appointments and OPE	40,314		40,314				\$ 80,628		0.00	NA	Yes	Legislative Counsel's General Program includes drafting services that are provided to executive and judicial branch agencies during limited periods of time of a two-year cycle. Statute allows Legislative Counsel to charge officers and agencies of executive and judicial branches for drafting services. This reduction brings the General Fund reduction to 4.7% and the Other Funds reduction to 2.49%.
6	3-OF	LC	14200-001	Services and Supplies	-	-	236	-	-	-	\$ 236	-	0.00	NA	No	A \$236 reduction to Other Funds services and supplies brings total Other Funds reductions to 2.5%. Services and supplies reductions limit LC's ability to address unanticipated costs, but should not impact services and outcomes.

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2025-2027 Biennium																
2025-2027 LAB		22,454,653	-	2,680,921	729,634	-	-	25,865,208								
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Dept	Prgm/ Div															
7	4-OF	LC	14200-001	Personal Services and OPE Temporary Appointments and OPE	67,023		67,023				\$ 134,046		0.00	NA	Yes	Legislative Counsel’s General Program includes drafting services that are provided to executive and judicial branch agencies during limited periods of time of a two-year cycle. Statute allows Legislative Counsel to charge officers and agencies of executive and judicial branches for drafting services. This reduction brings the General Fund and Other Funds reductions to 5%.
											\$ -					
											\$ -					
											\$ -					
											\$ -					
											\$ -					
				TOTAL	1,122,733	-	134,046	-	-	-	\$ 1,256,779	-	0.00			
Target (5%)		1,122,733			134,046	36,482										