

**TESTIMONY ON SENATE BILL 95  
BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY  
FEBRUARY 24, 2025**

**PRESENTED BY: MEAGAN FLYNN, OREGON SUPREME COURT CHIEF JUSTICE  
OREGON JUDICIAL DEPARTMENT**

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

I am here today to ask for your support for our request to increase judicial positions in the state by six in order to improve the quality and timeliness of justice in counties that need it most. Judges from several of those counties are here with me today. I would also like to direct attention to the extensive written support submitted for your record.

At its core, Senate Bill 95, as introduced, would add two new judicial positions in Lane County, one in Clackamas County, one in Douglas County, one in the judicial district serving Crook and Jefferson counties, and one in the judicial district serving Umatilla and Morrow counties.

In 2015, we partnered with the National Center for State Courts to conduct workload studies for all judges and staff. One such study identified the actual time it takes for judges to decide the many types of cases they hear and took into account the time-to-disposition goals adopted by the Oregon Judicial Department. The study concluded that our courts were significantly under resourced.

Since that study was completed, this legislature has approved seven new circuit judge positions. Despite those additions, according to the study's workload model, we still need another 27 additional judges in 14 judicial districts. The reason SB 95 only asks for six positions is because we are in the process of updating that study to reflect the increased judicial workload caused by changes in law and the increased complexity of resolving cases due to behavioral health and other issues.

I am here today to ask that you approve our request for a fraction of the current need by adding judicial capacity in counties that have both the greatest shortage of judges and the ability to put new judges to work quickly. This approach will help us to better serve the justice needs of Oregonians and help narrow the current justice gap.