

Dear Co-Chairs Gorsek and Smith and members of the Committee

My name is Andrew Hickerson and I've been Chief of Staff for Rep. John Lively for over 12 years. My first session in the Capitol was 2013. The following are my personal views and are not necessarily a reflection of Rep. Lively or others in our office.

I support a year-round LA 2 position. The work of our legislative members is vital to Oregon's success. We, as staff, are an extension of our members working hard to implement policies and accurately represent constituents.

During session, legislative staff put their life on hold for this job. It sounds dramatic, but its true. We consistently work 10-12 hour days, work on weekends and do whatever task is needed. This is not a complaint. I am honored to be part of an important process, to have the trust of my representative. However, it can be exhausting. Before 2019 the interim provided an opportunity to recharge for the next session as the workload was much more manageable. Post 2019 the workload has increased both during session and through the interim. There are more policies to work on, more bills to introduce, more workgroups to attend and more meetings to schedule.

There is certainly an increase in constituent casework. Our office has taken pride in our successful constituent casework. Representing, supporting and assisting constituents is our number one priority. Each year our office has tracked the number of constituent cases. Constituent casework in our office is simply defined as a constituent that requires a response. It requires staff to answer questions, complete research and in some cases contact and meet with state agencies, stakeholders, other elected officials etc. The amount of time it takes to complete a case can vary significantly, with some questions being resolved immediately or in days, while other cases can last weeks or months.

Since I've worked here for 12 years I simply cut our time in half, between the first six years in office and second six years in office to show the increased workload. I provided here both the first and second six year average and medians:

- First six years (2013-2018) our office averaged 170 constituent cases per year.
- First six years in office our median constituent case number per year was 159

- Second six years (2019-2024) our office averaged 325 constituent cases per year.
- Second six years in office our median constituent case number per year was 316.

For 2025 our office already has already completed 242 constituent cases through the first four months.

Providing each office the opportunity to hire a year round LA 2 will have a positive impact on our constituents. It will provide offices the ability to better manage the workload, better focus on both policy and constituents and create an improved legislative product. In turn benefiting all Oregonians.

Andrew Hickerson