



*The League of Women Voters of Oregon, established in 1920, is a grassroots nonpartisan political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government. We envision informed Oregonians participating in a fully accessible, responsive, and transparent government to achieve the common good. LWVOR Legislative Action is based on advocacy positions formed through studies and member consensus. The League never supports or opposes any candidate or political party.*

February 4, 2026

To: [Sen. Floyd Prozanski](#), Chair, [Senate Committee on Judiciary](#)

Re: [SB 1515](#) – Relating to wrongful convictions – **Support**

The League of Women Voters of Oregon strongly supports SB 1515 based on our support for the individual liberties guaranteed by the US Constitution and our belief that no person should suffer legal, economic, or administrative discrimination. SB 1515 is an extension of the Oregon Justice for Exonerees Act (SB 1584) from the 2022 Legislative Session, which created a process for those wrongfully convicted to petition for compensation. The League testified in support of the Act at that time, and we applaud the ongoing efforts by the Innocence Project, the Forensic Justice Project, and the Oregon Innocence Project to strengthen the Act with the introduction of SB 1515. We believe this bill is a much-needed step forward to address two key obstacles in current wrongful conviction law: unnecessary delays in the compensation process and convictions based on misleading expert testimony and flawed forensics.

First, the bill establishes a reasonable timeline of 180 days after the Oregon Attorney General receives a compensation petition, applicant case file, and all pertinent court records to determine whether the evidence satisfies the burden of proof requirements as stated in the law.

Secondly, the bill establishes the ability to petition for a new trial if a conviction was based on forensics that was not derived from evidence-based science, including hair comparison, bite mark analysis, and comparative bullet lead analysis. The statistic that “false or misleading forensics is a contributing factor in over 40% of wrongful convictions” in Oregon is eye-opening. Passage of SB 1515 would allow Oregon to join the seven other states that have enacted language to permit changes in science in their respective post-conviction relief statutes: California, Connecticut, Michigan, Nevada, Texas, West Virginia, and Wyoming.

As we look to righting wrongs in our criminal justice system, we believe it is relevant to reiterate this statement from our 2022 testimony: “Underlying our support for SB 1584 is the acknowledgement that racial bias contributes significantly to the inequities and injustices in our criminal justice system...although black Americans make up only 13% of the US population, they make up 40% of the prison population and almost 60% of all DNA exonerations in the country.”

The League believes that the time has come to make Oregon’s wrongful conviction law one we can be proud of. We urge your support for SB 1515.

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss this legislation.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Barbara Klein".

Barbara Klein  
Acting LWVOR President

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Marge Easley".

Marge Easley  
LWVOR Action Committee Member