



NEWS

Oregon Legislature - House Democratic Caucus

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Oregon House Passes Class Action Reform Bill

HB 2700 would end the practice of letting wrongdoers keep unclaimed class action funds

Salem, Oregon—Today, the Oregon House of Representatives passed a landmark class action reform bill that will increase corporate accountability and provide funds for legal services for vulnerable Oregonians.

Currently, Oregon law says that when a corporation is found liable for harming the public and a judge awards a settlement to those who were injured, the corporation is able to keep any unclaimed settlement funds, dramatically reducing their financial liability. Oregon is one of only a couple of states in the country that allows corporate wrongdoers to keep unclaimed settlement funds.

[HB 2700](#) would end that practice by giving the judge in the case discretion to send up to 50% of the unclaimed funds to a service addressing the damage done in a specific case. The remainder of the money would go to Legal Aid Services of Oregon, providing critical access to civil legal services for those most in need.

“Corporations who have hurt, endangered, or ripped off Oregonians should be required to pay the full cost of damages awarded to the people they’ve harmed,” says Rep. Jennifer Williamson (D-Portland). “House Bill 2700 will increase corporate accountability in our civil justice system and bring Oregon’s class action laws more in line with the rest of the country.”

Legal Aid Services of Oregon provides legal assistance to low-income Oregonians dealing with cases like foreclosure, child support, elder abuse, unpaid wages, and domestic violence. The funds made available by HB 2700 would help provide legal services to more struggling families in every corner of the state.

“It’s time we stop letting wrongdoers off the hook. Nearly every state in the nation has a law similar to HB 2700 on the books,” says Rep. Tobias Read (D-Beaverton). “It’s a

common-sense reform, and it'll help provide desperately needed funds for programs that provide access to the justice system for low-income Oregonians.”

HB 2700 passed the floor on a vote of 35-22. The bill now moves to the Senate for consideration.

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