

2017 LEGISLATION ALERTS

Judicial Administration

HB 2795 (Ch. 663) Oregon eCourt, Filing Fee Increases

HB 2795 was proposed by the Oregon Judicial Department. The bill – in conjunction with HB 2797 and with an increase in document access fees – will raise funds to pay for the ongoing maintenance costs of the Oregon eCourt system.

The measure increased most filing fees charged by courts for filings, motions, and settlements and trial fees by five percent. In addition, HB 2795 increases prevailing party fees and reduces the filing fee for foreign judgments.

HB 2795 took effect on August, 8, 2017.

HB 2797 (Ch. 712) Oregon eCourt, Criminal Fines and Assessments

HB 2797 was proposed by the Oregon Judicial Department. The bill – in conjunction with HB 2795 and with an increase in document access fees – will raise funds to pay for the ongoing maintenance costs of the Oregon eCourt system.

The measure increased presumptive fines for certain violations, generally by five dollars, to be deposited in the Criminal Fines Account.

HB 2797 took effect on August 15, 2017.

SB 490 (Ch. 94) Oregon State Bar Governance

SB 490 made several minor changes to the governance of the Oregon State Bar.

The bill renamed the position of “executive director” of the bar to “chief executive officer” of the bar.

Additionally, the bill added language to ORS 9.200 to allow the Board of Governors to assess late payment penalties against a member delinquent in the payment of membership fees.

Finally, the bill clarified sections of statutes relating to the distribution of ballots for elections to the Board of Governors and House of Delegates by using terminology reflecting that elections are largely held electronically and do not normally involve the use of paper ballots distributed to the members at large.

SB 490 took effect on May 17, 2017.

SB 491 (Ch. 524) Oregon State Bar Disciplinary System

SB 491 made several changes relating to the process of investigating attorneys accused of misconduct. The bill provides explicit statutory authority for the bar to employ one or more professional adjudicators to preside over disciplinary hearings, subject to rules promulgated by the Supreme Court and the OSB bylaws.

The bill eliminated the Local Professional Responsibility Committees (LPRCs), as these committees are rarely used in modern investigations. The bill also shifted the responsibility to appoint the State Professional Responsibility Board (SPRB) from the Board of Governors to the Oregon Supreme Court in order to ensure greater independence of the SPRB from the bar itself.

Finally, the bill extended statutory immunity to disciplinary monitors and new lawyer mentors who help the bar fulfill its regulatory function.

SB 491 took effect on June 29, 2017.