



Department of Justice

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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The Department of Justice filed an antitrust suit today charging that fee schedules of the Oregon State Bar are unreasonable restraints of trade because they have eliminated fee competition among lawyers in the sale of legal services.

Attorney General William B. Saxbe said the civil suit, which charged a violation of Section 1 of the Sherman Act, was filed in U.S. District Court in Portland, Oregon, where the Oregon State Bar maintains its principal office.

All of the approximately 3,700 attorneys licensed to practice law in Oregon are required by state law to be members of the association, the Department suit said.

Assistant Attorney General Thomas E. Kauper, in charge of the Antitrust Division, said the suit charged that OSB and its members have for many years combined to violate Section 1 of the Sherman Act by agreeing to:

- adopt uniform minimum fee schedules;
- adopt uniform suggested fee schedules; and
- publish, circulate, and utilize uniform minimum and uniform suggested fee schedules.

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As a result of these activities, the complaint charged, fees for the sale of legal services have been fixed at artificial levels, and purchasers of legal services have been denied the right to obtain such services at competitively determined fees.

According to the complaint, members of OSB receive total estimated revenues of \$150 million each year for rendering legal services.

The suit asked that the court enjoin OSB and its members from adopting, distributing, or suggesting any schedule of legal fees to be charged by attorneys in the State of Oregon.

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