

Honorable Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary

My name is Nyla Jebousek and I am a retired attorney who has represented women in Domestic Violence and Stalking cases. Immediately after law school, in 1998 I was the Americorps attorney at Lane County Legal Aid whose caseload consisted exclusively of these matters.

Adding stalking cases to the list of matters for which prevailing party fees are exempt will give these cases parity with Family Abuse Prevention Act restraining orders. Both actions are designed to protect petitioners from harm.

Many women who seek relief under these statutes cannot afford an attorney to represent them. My caseload at Legal Aid was exclusively women in this financial situation.

One of the cases I argued at the Oregon Court of Appeals was *Boyd v Essen*. Cite as 170 Or App 509 (2000) 511 KISTLER, J. T. My client had represented herself at hearing and prevailed. Her order was appealed and I represented her to retain her stalking order. I bring this case to your attention because it illustrates the challenges women face when they represent themselves at hearing. The dissenting opinion repeatedly mentions the record as being deficient. My client was not an experienced advocate and struggled to present her case under emotionally stressful circumstances. If she had failed to prevail, adding the burden of prevailing party fees would have been an additional injustice.

I write in support of SB 708.

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