



Oregon Law Center

WORKING TOGETHER TO ACHIEVE JUSTICE FOR LOW INCOME OREGONIANS

522 SW Fifth Ave.
Suite 812
Portland, OR 97204

Monica A. Goracke

P: 503.473.8312
F: 503.295.0676
mgoracke@oregonlawcenter.org

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The Honorable Elizabeth Steiner-Hayward, Co-Chair
The Honorable Dan Rayfield, Co-Chair
Joint Committee on Ways and Means
900 Court Street NE
H-178 State Capitol
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Co-Chairs Steiner-Hayward and Rayfield,

I am writing to support the Oregon State Bar's request for \$2,334,200 in state funding to develop a one-stop online civil legal resource portal. Oregon Law Center is one of Oregon's three civil legal aid providers. We and our partner legal aid organizations, Legal Aid Services of Oregon and the Center for Nonprofit Legal Services in Jackson County, have been working with the Bar, Oregon Judicial Department, Oregon Law Foundation, and other partners for the past two years to develop this project. This collaboration will help promote access to justice for thousands of Oregonians with civil legal needs.

As legal aid providers, our mission is to achieve justice for the low-income communities of Oregon by providing a full range of the highest-quality civil legal services. We know that some clients need brief advice and information while others require full representation in their legal matters. During the pandemic, the demand for our legal information and services increased sharply as massive changes impacted Oregonians' housing, employment, public benefits, consumer, and other needs. The information we published and presentations we conducted reached a wider audience than ever before.

The new civil legal resource portal will give us and our partners an invaluable opportunity to improve access to the information and services we provide. The ability to create and keep legal information and resources up to date, in plain language, and translated into multiple languages is particularly exciting for us. A centralized and coordinated information and referral site would benefit legal aid clients and many other Oregonians. It would help us provide our services more efficiently and effectively. On behalf of my colleagues in civil legal aid leadership, I thank you for considering this request to provide state funding for the civil legal resource portal.

Sincerely yours,

Monica Goracke, Executive Director