



Domestic Violence Clinic
University of Oregon School of Law
PO Box 10486, Eugene, OR 97440

Co-chairs Frederick, McLain, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Samantha Takacs and I'm a staff attorney working in the Domestic Violence Clinic at the University of Oregon. I am also a proud graduate of the University Oregon School of Law, and participated in the clinic myself as a law student. I am writing to urge you to support robust funding for our Public University State Programs, including the Clinical Legal Education Program.

As a student participant in the Domestic Violence Protective Order Clinic, I represented a survivor of domestic violence in court as she sought a restraining order to protect her from her abuser. My experience was incomparable and could not have happened without state funding for the Clinical Legal Education Program.

Through my representation of my survivor client, my eyes were opened to how essential this type of representation is for lower-income Oregonians. My client was concerned about the logistics of paying her rent with her abuser off the lease, making her options for legal representation in getting her restraining order extremely limited. The Domestic Violence Clinic was a beacon of hope in a dark time. My client's case was somewhat complicated and she would surely have been unsuccessful without legal representation, not to mention the furtherance of abuse and manipulation that could have continued had she faced her abuser as a pro se petitioner.

In addition to the benefits that my client received, the learning experience on my end was indescribable and nothing short of remarkable. Not only did I learn about courtroom procedure and the law surrounding protective orders, but I gained valuable real-world experience working with a survivor client in a sensitive situation. Thanks to my experience in the Clinic as a student, after passing the bar, I have continued to represent survivors in various legal cases as a staff attorney with the Clinic. The Clinic was essential to my education and preparation for practice. It is critical that clinics, like the Domestic Violence Clinic, have adequate funding so that they can continue supporting future students as well as survivors seeking representation. A 7.4% funding increase will cover the necessary increasing costs for state programs, including the Clinical Legal Education Program.

The community as a whole benefit from the funding that makes our legal clinics possible. Future lawyers receive essential practical experience, and clients who wouldn't otherwise be able to receive representation benefit from the assistance of zealous advocates. I cannot overstate how important this Clinic is to so many people.

As a proud graduate and now employee at our state's only public law school, I urge this committee to prioritize funding for public higher education, including Public University State Programs.

Sincerely,

Samantha Takacs

Eugene, OR