

**LAW FIRMS FOR CIVIL EQUAL JUSTICE**

c/o Charles W. Riley Jr., President

Lane Powell PC

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March 6, 2017

*Sent via Email*

Rep. Frank Chopp, Speaker  
Rep. Pat Sullivan, Majority Leader  
Rep. Dan Kristiansen, Minority Leader  
Rep. Joel Kretz, Deputy Minority Leader  
Rep. Tina Orwall, Speaker Pro Tempore  
Rep. Eric Pettigrew, Majority Caucus Chair  
Rep. Gael Tarleton, Majority Floor Leader  
Rep. J.T. Wilcox, Minority Floor Leader  
Rep. Matt Shea, Minority Caucus Chair  
Rep. Timm Ormsby, Appropriations  
Committee Chair  
Rep. Bruce Chandler, Appropriations  
Committee, Ranking Minority Member  
Rep. Laurie Jinkins, Judiciary  
Committee Chair  
Rep. Jay Rodne, Judiciary Committee  
Ranking Minority Member

Sen. Mark Schoesler, Majority Leader  
Sen. Sharon Nelson, Democratic Leader  
Sen. Tim Sheldon, President Pro Tempore  
Sen. Sharon Brown, Deputy Leader  
Sen. Andy Billig, Deputy Minority Leader  
Sen. Joe Fain, Majority Floor Leader  
Sen. Marko Liias, Democratic Floor Leader  
Sen. Randi Becker, Majority Caucus Chair  
Sen. John McCoy, Democratic Caucus Chair  
Sen. Mike Padden, Law and Justice Committee  
Chair  
Sen. Jamie Pedersen, Law and Justice Committee  
Ranking Minority Member  
Sen. John Braun, Ways and Means Committee  
Chair  
Sen. Kevin Ranker, Ways and Means Committee  
Ranking Minority Member

Legislative Building  
416 Sid Snyder Ave., SW  
Olympia, Washington 98501

*Re: Funding for Civil Legal Aid*

Dear Leaders of the Washington State Legislature:

We are writing on behalf of 23 of the largest law firms in Washington State to urge you to increase funding for civil legal aid by \$12.012 million for the fiscal year 2017-19 biennium. This would fully fund Phase I of the Office of Civil Legal Aid's Civil Justice Reinvestment Plan.

**If our legal system does not work for all, it does not work.** Access to the legal system is important to all Washingtonians, and essential to the fair administration of justice. For that reason, the

law firms that join in this letter have consistently made significant investments in expanding free legal services in Washington. In 2016, our firms collectively donated roughly 64,000 hours of volunteer legal work worth nearly \$27 million, and directly contributed about \$800,000 to legal service organizations. These numbers represent just a fraction of the contributions made by law firms and lawyers in the state.

Unfortunately, the 2015 Civil Legal Needs Study demonstrates that even with these significant private contributions, Washington is failing at making justice accessible to everyone. The study found:

- More than 70% of low-income households in Washington experience at least one important civil legal problem each year.
- One unresolved legal problem frequently leads to another, related legal challenge, with low-income households facing an average of nine legal problems during the space of a year.
- More than 76% of the time, low-income households do not receive any legal assistance at all.

This shortfall in Washington's civil legal aid services is unacceptable. It not only undermines our system of justice, but also contributes to a variety of larger societal problems. The most common legal issues faced by low-income Washingtonians include accessing affordable health care, finding and keeping employment, using financial services, avoiding consumer exploitation, keeping their families safe from violence and abuse, securing stable housing, and applying for government assistance. These legal challenges implicate many pressing public issues, and effectively addressing these legal needs is an essential element of developing broader solutions to issues such as homelessness, affordable health care, and unemployment.

Unsurprisingly, nearly two-thirds of low-income people in Washington have little or no confidence in the capacity of our justice system to help them address these crucial legal challenges. Confidence in our legal system is essential to its continuing credibility and effectiveness.

We must, and can, do better. As representatives of the legal community, we are dedicated to continuing to explore avenues to close this significant gap in services. But volunteer hours and charitable contributions alone cannot come close to meeting the growing demand for legal aid in our state. We therefore join many of the largest companies in Washington in their request, reflected in the enclosed letter, for you to take action this session to fully fund the Civil Justice Reinvestment Plan submitted by the Office of Civil Legal Aid.

By committing to this funding, you will join us in affirming the fundamental principle that our state justice system must be open to all—not just those who can afford it.

Sincerely,

Matt B. Hanna  
*Managing Partner*  
**Cairncross & Hempelmann PS**

Robert Blackstone  
*Partner-in-Charge, Seattle*  
**Davis Wright Tremaine LLP**

Steve Yentzer  
*Managing Partner, Seattle*  
**DLA Piper**

Ken Cutler  
*Managing Partner*  
**Dorsey & Whitney LLP**

Kate Fritz  
*Managing Partner*  
**Fenwick & West LLP**

Jeffrey G. Frank  
*Managing Partner, Seattle*  
John Nelson  
*Managing Partner, Spokane*  
**Foster Pepper PLLC**

Greg Duff  
*Chair*  
**Garvey Schubert Barer**

Warren E. Martin  
*Managing Partner*  
**Gordon Thomas Honeywell**

Scott E. Collins  
*Managing Partner*  
**Helsell Fetterman LLP**

Gary M. Fallon  
*President*  
**Hillis Clark Martin & Peterson PS**

David J. Lawyer  
*President*  
**Inslee Best Doezie & Ryder PS**

Pallavi Mehta Wahi  
*Administrative Partner, Seattle*  
**K&L Gates LLP**

Bruce Larson  
*President*  
**Karr Tuttle Campbell**

Lynn Lincoln Sarko  
*Managing Partner*  
**Keller Rohrback LLP**

Charles Riley  
*President*  
**Lane Powell PC**

Steve Miller  
*Partner-in-Charge, Seattle*  
**Miller Nash Graham & Dunn LLP**

Fred Rivera  
*Managing Partner, Seattle*  
**Perkins Coie LLP**

Joseph Shickich  
*President and CEO*  
**Riddell Williams PS**

David Tift  
*Managing Partner*  
**Ryan Swanson & Cleveland PLLC**

Connie Sue M. Martin  
*Partner-in-Charge, Seattle*  
**Schwabe Williamson & Wyatt PC**

Vanessa Sopriano Power  
*Managing Partner, Seattle*  
**Stoel Rives LLP**

Kelly Twiss Noonan  
*Managing Shareholder*  
**Stokes Lawrence PS (Seattle)**  
**Stokes Lawrence Velikanje Moore  
& Shore (Yakima)**

Jessie L. Harris  
*Managing Partner*  
**Williams Kastner**

Enclosure

cc: House Appropriations Committee Members  
House Judiciary Committee Members  
Senate Ways and Means Committee Members  
Senate Law and Justice Committee Members

**LAW FIRMS FOR EQUAL CIVIL JUSTICE**

c/o Ellen Jackson  
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March 22, 2017

*Sent via Email*

Rep. Frank Chopp, Speaker  
Rep. Pat Sullivan, Majority Leader  
Rep. Dan Kristiansen, Minority Leader  
Rep. Joel Kretz, Deputy Minority Leader  
Rep. Tina Orwall, Speaker Pro Tempore  
Rep. Eric Pettigrew, Majority Caucus Chair  
Rep. Gael Tarleton, Majority Floor Leader  
Rep. J.T. Wilcox, Minority Floor Leader  
Rep. Matt Shea, Minority Caucus Chair  
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Committee Chair  
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Sen. Sharon Nelson, Democratic Leader  
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Sen. John McCoy, Democratic Caucus Chair  
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Sen. John Braun, Ways and Means  
Committee Chair  
Sen. Kevin Ranker, Ways and Means  
Ranking Minority Member

Legislative Building  
416 Sid Snyder Ave., SW  
Olympia, Washington 98501

*Re: Civil Legal Aid Funding*

Dear Leaders of the Washington State Legislature:

We are partners of some of the largest law firms in Central Washington, writing to urge you to increase funding for civil legal aid by \$12.012 million for the fiscal year 2017-19 biennium. This would fully fund Phase I of the Civil Justice Reinvestment Plan submitted by the Office of Civil Legal Aid.

**If our legal system does not work for all of us, it does not work.** Access to the legal system is important to all Washingtonians, and essential to the fair administration of justice.

Unfortunately, the 2015 Civil Legal Needs Study demonstrates that Washington is failing at making justice accessible to everyone. The study found that:

- More than 70% of low-income households in Washington experience at least one important civil legal problem each year.
- One unresolved legal problem frequently leads to another, related legal challenge, with low-income households reporting an average of nine legal problems each.
- More than 76% of the time, low-income households do not receive any legal assistance with these challenges.

This shortfall in Washington's civil legal aid services is unacceptable. It not only undermines our system of justice, but also contributes to a variety of larger societal problems. The legal challenges faced by low-income Washingtonians implicate many pressing public issues, and effectively addressing them is an essential element of broader solutions. For example, the most common legal problems currently faced by low-income Washingtonians relate to their ability to access affordable health care, find and keep employment, use financial services free of consumer exploitation, keep their families safe from violence and abuse, secure stable housing, and apply for government assistance.

Unsurprisingly, nearly two-thirds of low-income people in Washington have little or no confidence in the capacity of our justice system to help them address these crucial legal challenges. And confidence in our legal system is essential to its continuing credibility and effectiveness.

We must do better. As representatives of the legal community, we are dedicated to solving this problem. We therefore join many others in Washington in their request for you to take action this session to fully fund the Civil Justice Reinvestment Plan submitted by the Office of Civil Legal Aid.

By committing to this funding, you will join us in affirming the fundamental principle that our state justice system must be open to all—not just those who can afford it.

Sincerely,

Ellen Jackson and Dustin Yeager  
*Associate and Shareholder*  
**Stokes Lawrence Velikanje Moore &  
Shore (Yakima)**

Larry Martin  
*Managing Partner*  
**Halverson | Northwest Law Group, P.C.**  
(Yakima and Sunnyside)

Shawn Murphy  
*Partner*  
**Thorner, Kennedy & Gano P.S.** (Yakima)

Russell J. Speidel  
*Partner*  
**Speidel Bentsen, LLP** (Wenatchee)

Bryan Smith  
*Partner*  
**Tamaki Law** (Yakima)

Jeanie R. Tolcacher  
*Shareholder*  
**Lyon Weigand & Gustafson, PS** (Yakima)

cc: House Appropriations Committee Members  
House Judiciary Committee Members  
Senate Ways and Means Committee Members  
Senate Law and Justice Committee Members  
Rep. David Taylor  
Rep. Bruce Chandler  
Sen. Jim Honeyford  
Rep. Matt Manweller  
Rep. Tom Dent  
Sen. Judy Warnick  
Rep. Mike Steele  
Rep. Cary Condotta  
Sen. Brad Hawkins  
Rep. Gina McCabe  
Rep. Norm Johnson  
Sen. Curtis King

**LAW FIRMS FOR EQUAL CIVIL JUSTICE**

c/o Loren Etengoff  
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March 22, 2017

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Rep. Jay Rodne, Judiciary Committee,  
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Sen. John Braun, Ways and Means  
Committee Chair  
Sen. Kevin Ranker, Ways and Means  
Ranking Minority Member

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*Re: Civil Legal Aid Funding*

Dear Leaders of the Washington State Legislature:

We are partners of some of the largest law firms in Vancouver and southwestern Washington, writing to urge you to increase funding for civil legal aid by \$12.012 million for the fiscal year 2017-19 biennium. This would fully fund Phase I of the Civil Justice Reinvestment Plan submitted by the Office of Civil Legal Aid.



**If our legal system does not work for all of us, it does not work.** Access to the legal system is important to all Washingtonians, and essential to the fair administration of justice.

Unfortunately, the 2015 Civil Legal Needs Study demonstrates that Washington is failing at making justice accessible to everyone. The study found that:

- More than 70% of low-income households in Washington experience at least one important civil legal problem each year.
- One unresolved legal problem frequently leads to another, related legal challenge, with low-income households reporting an average of nine legal problems each.
- More than 76% of the time, low-income households do not receive any legal assistance with these challenges.

This shortfall in Washington's civil legal aid services is unacceptable. It not only undermines our system of justice, but also contributes to a variety of larger societal problems. The legal challenges faced by low-income Washingtonians implicate many pressing public issues, and effectively addressing them is an essential element of broader solutions. For example, the most common legal problems currently faced by low-income Washingtonians relate to their ability to access affordable health care, find and keep employment, use financial services free of consumer exploitation, keep their families safe from violence and abuse, secure stable housing, and apply for government assistance.

Unsurprisingly, nearly two-thirds of low-income people in Washington have little or no confidence in the capacity of our justice system to help them address these crucial legal challenges. And confidence in our legal system is essential to its continuing credibility and effectiveness.

We must do better. As representatives of the legal community, we are dedicated to solving this problem. We therefore join many others in Washington in their request for you to take action this session to fully fund the Civil Justice Reinvestment Plan submitted by the Office of Civil Legal Aid.

By committing to this funding, you will join us in affirming the fundamental principle that our state justice system must be open to all—not just those who can afford it.

Sincerely,

Loren Etengoff  
*Owner*  
**The Law Offices of Loren Scott Etengoff**

Mila Boyd  
*Of Counsel*  
**Wheeler Montgomery & Boyd, PLLC**

William V. Baumgartner, William F.  
Nelson, Laurence R. Wagner  
*Partners*  
**Baumgartner, Nelson & Wagner, PLLC**

Jane Clark  
*Owner*  
**The Law Offices of Jane Clark**

Gregory E. Price  
*Owner*  
**The Law Offices of Gregory E. Price, P.S.**

William K. Thayer  
*Partner*  
**Schauermann Thayer Jacobs Staples &  
Edwards PS**

cc: House Appropriations Committee Members  
House Judiciary Committee Members  
Senate Ways and Means Committee Members  
Senate Law and Justice Committee Members  
Rep. Monica Jurado Stonier  
Rep. Sharon Wylie  
Sen. Annette Cleveland  
Rep. Paul Harris  
Rep. Vicki Kraft  
Sen. Lynda Wilson  
Rep. Liz Pike  
Rep. Brandon Vick  
Sen. Ann Rivers  
Rep. Gina McCabe  
Rep. Norm Johnson  
Sen. Curtis King

**LAW FIRMS FOR EQUAL CIVIL JUSTICE**

c/o Kirsten Barron  
Barron | Smith | Daugert, PLLC  
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[kbarron@barronsmithlaw.com](mailto:kbarron@barronsmithlaw.com)

April 5, 2017

*Sent via Email*

Rep. Frank Chopp, Speaker  
Rep. Pat Sullivan, Majority Leader  
Rep. Dan Kristiansen, Minority Leader  
Rep. Joel Kretz, Deputy Minority Leader  
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Legislative Building  
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*Re: Civil Legal Aid Funding*

Dear Members of the Washington State Legislature:

We are partners of some of the largest law firms in Bellingham and northern Washington, writing to urge you to increase funding for civil legal aid by \$12.012 million for the fiscal year 2017-19 biennium. This would fully fund Phase I of the Civil Justice Reinvestment Plan submitted by the Office of Civil Legal Aid.

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Sincerely,

Kirsten Barron  
*Partner*

**Barron | Smith | Daugert, PLLC**  
(Bellingham)

Jane Boman  
**Whatcom County Public Defender**

James E. Britain  
*Partner*  
**Britain | Krell, PLLC** (Bellingham)

Michael P. Brodsky  
*Owner*  
**Michael P. Brodsky, Attorney at Law**  
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Margaret Delp  
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**Coppinger Carter, P.S.** (Bellingham)

Kip Wayerski  
*Partner*  
**Wayerski Zmolek** (Bellingham)

Dominique Zervas  
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**Zervas Law, P.S.** (Bellingham)

cc: House Appropriations Committee Members  
House Judiciary Committee Members  
Senate Ways and Means Committee Members  
Senate Law and Justice Committee Members  
Rep. Luanne Van Werven  
Rep. Vincent Buys  
Sen. Doug Ericksen  
Rep. Kristine Lytton  
Rep. Jeff Morris  
Sen. Kevin Ranker  
Rep. Norma Smith  
Rep. Dave Hayes  
Sen. Barbara Bailey  
Rep. Dan Kristiansen  
Rep. John Koster  
Sen. Kirk Pearson