

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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509.853.3000
ellen.jackson@stokeslaw.com

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
Rep. Timm Ormsby, Appropriations
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Sen. Randi Becker, Majority Caucus Chair
Sen. John McCoy, Democratic Caucus Chair
Sen. Mike Padden, Law and Justice
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Ranking Minority Member
Sen. John Braun, Ways and Means
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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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Vancouver, WA 98663
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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.

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

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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
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Bellingham, WA 98225
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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
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
Ranking Minority Member
Rep. Laurie Jenkins, Judiciary
Committee Chair
Rep. Jay Rodne, Judiciary Committee,
Ranking Minority Member

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Sen. Sharon Brown, Deputy Leader
Sen. Andy Billig, Deputy Minority Leader
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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
Ranking Minority Member
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 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
(Bellingham)

Margaret Delp
Owner
Margaret Delp Law Office (Langley)

Rajeev Majumdar
Partner
North Whatcom Law (Blaine)

Karen Phillips
Partner
Coppinger Carter, P.S. (Bellingham)

Kip Wayerski
Partner
Wayerski Zmolek (Bellingham)

Dominique Zervas
Owner
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