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ASSOCIATION OF
ATTORNEYS GENERAL

PRESIDENT

Dave Yost

Ohio
Attorney General

May 8, 2023

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Ellen F. Rosenblum

Oregon
Attorney General

The Hon. Kay Granger
Chairwoman
Committee on Appropriations
H-307, The Capitol
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Hon. Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
2413 Rayburn House Office Bldg.
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

VICE PRESIDENT

John Formella

New Hampshire
Attorney General

The Hon. Hal Rogers
Chairman
Subcommittee on Commerce
Justice, Science, and Related
Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
H-310, The Capitol
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Hon. Matt Cartwright
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Commerce,
Justice, Science and Related
Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
1036 Longworth Office Bldg.
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

IMMEDIATE PAST
PRESIDENT

Josh Stein

North Carolina
Attorney General

Brian Kane

Executive Director

1850 M Street NW
12th Floor
Washington, DC 20036
(202) 326-6000
www.naag.org

Re: State Attorneys General Urge Robust Funding for Legal Services Corporation

Dear Chair Granger, Ranking Member DeLauro, Chair Rogers, and Ranking Member Cartwright:

As state attorneys general, we have joined together across party lines to respectfully request that you prioritize investment in the Legal Services Corporation (LSC) in the Fiscal Year 2024 Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill. Investment in LSC is essential to ensuring that communities across our nation have access to critically needed civil legal services.

In the 1974 Legal Services Corporation Act that established LSC, Congress acknowledged the profound inequities in access to civil justice and observed that ***“providing legal assistance to those who face an economic barrier to adequate legal counsel will serve best the ends of justice and assist in improving opportunities for low-income persons.”*** LSC carries out this important mission by distributing over 90% of its total funding to independent nonprofit legal aid programs that provide civil legal assistance to residents in every state, territory, and congressional district. Indeed, formal assessments and compliance reviews of grants confirm that LSC’s impactful work provides high quality legal assistance to those who would otherwise be unable to afford legal counsel. The services delivered by LSC’s grantees include legal assistance to victims of natural disasters and legal counsel to under-resourced Americans:

- In June 2022, LSC awarded \$38 million in grants to 19 legal aid organizations in 14 states and territories: Alabama, California, Florida, Iowa, Kentucky, Louisiana, New Jersey, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Texas, and Puerto Rico. The legal services made possible by this funding were an essential component of comprehensive disaster relief in devastated communities. Specifically, LSC-funded grantees helped people to repair and stay in their homes, obtain key identification documents, apply for benefits, file insurance claims, access the FEMA process, and more.
- In August 2022, LSC awarded grants totaling \$4.75 million to 15 legal aid organizations in 11 states and territories: Alaska, California, Georgia, Illinois, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Michigan, Nevada, Ohio, Wisconsin, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. LSC’s Pro Bono Innovation Fund provides competitive awards to grantees that partner with local attorneys, businesses, and programs to provide pro bono legal services to low-income residents in need of everyday legal assistance, including protection of their rights against debt collectors, representation in eviction proceedings, and safeguarding of their homes from bank foreclosure, to name just a few. Crucially, this program also helps to fill the justice gaps created by legal deserts across our nation.

The powerful impact of LSC’s work cannot be overstated, particularly in rural areas that tend to have the highest poverty rates in our country. LSC’s grantees work to provide on-the-ground legal assistance to well over a million Americans annually: veterans struggling to access their benefits, seniors who have been defrauded, children in the foster system, renters facing eviction, victims of domestic violence, farmers struggling financially, individuals facing substance addiction, victims of weather-related events . . . the list is long and growing, but the legal needs of millions of Americans continue to be unmet due to a history of chronic underfunding. In fact, 50% of eligible clients are turned away each year

due to lack of resources. It is imperative now more than ever that Congress heeds this call to increase financial support for LSC.

As attorneys and attorneys general, we share a profound belief in our nation's promise of equal access to justice. We hope that you too will prioritize this basic principle of our legal system by supporting robust funding for LSC's vital work in delivering legal services to residents who need it most. We thank you in advance for your commitment to LSC's mission.

The four co-sponsors of this letter – the District of Columbia, Massachusetts, Oklahoma, and Tennessee – are joined by the undersigned attorneys general across the U.S. states and its territories.

Sincerely,



Brian Schwalb
District of Columbia Attorney General



Andrea Joy Campbell
Massachusetts Attorney General



Gentner Drummond
Oklahoma Attorney General



Jonathan Skrmetti
Tennessee Attorney General

Treg R. Taylor
Alaska Attorney General

Fainu'ulelei Ala'ilima-Utu
American Samoa Attorney General

Rob Bonta
California Attorney General

Phil Weiser
Colorado Attorney General

William Tong
Connecticut Attorney General

Kathleen Jennings
Delaware Attorney General

Ashley Moody
Florida Attorney General

Anne E. Lopez
Hawaii Attorney General

Kwame Raoul
Illinois Attorney General

Brenna Bird
Iowa Attorney General

Aaron M. Frey
Maine Attorney General

Anthony G. Brown
Maryland Attorney General



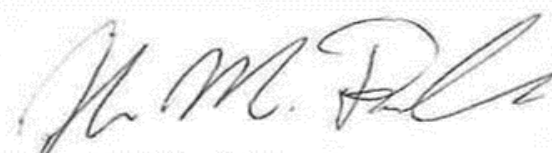
Dana Nessel
Michigan Attorney General



Keith Ellison
Minnesota Attorney General



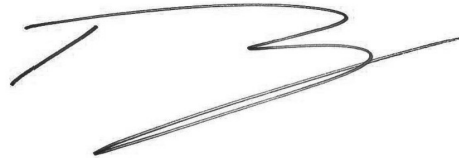
Aaron D. Ford
Nevada Attorney General



John M. Formella
New Hampshire Attorney General



Matthew J. Platkin
New Jersey Attorney General



Raúl Torrez
New Mexico Attorney General



Letitia James
New York Attorney General



Josh Stein
North Carolina Attorney General



Drew H. Wrigley
North Dakota Attorney General



Edward Manibusan
Northern Mariana Islands Attorney General



Ellen F. Rosenblum
Oregon Attorney General



Michelle Henry
Pennsylvania Attorney General

Domingo Emanuelli-Hernández
Puerto Rico Attorney General

Peter F. Neronha
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Charity Clark
Vermont Attorney General

Jason S. Miyares
Virginia Attorney General

Robert W. Ferguson
Washington Attorney General

Joshua L. Kaul
Wisconsin Attorney General

Bridget Hill
Wyoming Attorney General

cc: The Honorable Kevin McCarthy, Speaker, U.S. House of Representatives
The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries, Minority Leader, U.S. House of Representatives



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May 8, 2023

The Hon. Patty Murray
Chair

Committee on Appropriations
S-128, The Capitol
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Hon. Jeanne Shaheen
Chair
Sen. Appropriations Committee
Subcommittee on Commerce,
Justice, Science, and Related
Agencies
506 Hart Senate Office Bldg.
Washington, DC 20510

The Hon. Susan Collins
Ranking Member

Committee on Appropriations
413 Dirksen Senate Office Bldg.
Washington, DC 20510

The Hon. Jerry Moran
Ranking Member
Sen. Appropriations Committee
Subcommittee on Commerce,
Justice, Science, and Related
Agencies
521 Dirksen Senate Office Bldg.
Washington, DC 20510

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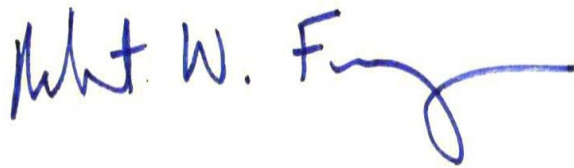
Ariel M. Smith
U.S. Virgin Islands Acting Attorney General



Charity Clark
Vermont Attorney General



Jason S. Miyares
Virginia Attorney General



Robert W. Ferguson
Washington Attorney General



Joshua L. Kaul
Wisconsin Attorney General



Bridget Hill
Wyoming Attorney General

cc: The Honorable Charles Schumer, Majority Leader, U.S. Senate
The Honorable Mitch McConnell, Minority Leader, U.S. Senate