

From: [Adam McKibben](#)
To: [JWMED Exhibits](#)
Cc: [Sen Frederick](#); [Rep McLain](#); [Sen Roblan](#); [Sen Thomsen](#); [Rep Alonso Leon](#); [Rep Drazan](#); [Rep Meek](#); [Rep Nearman](#)
Subject: Joint Ways and Means Committee RE: Domestic Violence Clinic Legal Education Fund
Date: Tuesday, April 2, 2019 9:40:14 AM

Good morning Joint Ways and Means Committee,

My understanding is that your consideration of HB 5024 contemplates elimination of the Domestic Violence Clinical Legal Education Fund.

As a recent alumnus of the University of Oregon Domestic Violence Clinic (2016), I strongly encourage you to renew the Clinic's financial support. The Clinic is a critical resource for the Eugene/Lane County community and for University of Oregon law students.

Unfortunately, a large portion of domestic violence survivors have limited or no income available with which to hire an attorney. I observed first-hand the tremendous need for affordable representation. Many survivors come from families with limited resources and cannot otherwise afford an attorney. Many additional survivors have been systematically cut-off from financial resources by their abusers. This can present situations where the abuser is able to retain legal counsel and the survivor is not. The Domestic Violence Clinic provides, *inter alia*, free consultations to survivors in cooperation with organizations like Women's Space, and provides free representation for women seeking Family Abuse Prevention Act (FAPA) Restraining Orders and Stalking Orders.

The time immediately following when a survivor leaves an abusive relationship is often found to be the most dangerous for the survivor. Clinic attorneys and law students help survivors safety plan and pursue necessary legal protections such as protective orders.

The Domestic Violence Clinic is also a tremendously valuable resource for law students' development. Without the consistent baseline of funding provided by the legislature, my understanding is that the Clinic otherwise relies heavily on grant based funding. The Clinic may not be able to retain skilled instructors without the certainty that they will be paid. The Clinic instructors have their own lives and families to support. They all work hard, provide vital community services, and very much deserve some predictability as to their compensation.

Lastly, the Domestic Violence Clinic is instrumental for the education and development of law students. Personally, I treasure my two semesters of experience with the Domestic Violence Clinic as a student. The Clinic provided me the opportunity to gain numerous practical legal skills. While many law school classes helped develop my ability to understand the law and undertake legal analyses, the Domestic Violence Clinic allowed me to gain actual hands-on experience working with clients, preparing for hearings, and appearing in Court. After passing the bar and beginning to practice, I walked into my first hearing with significantly more confidence having previously appeared as a law student on behalf of survivors. I strongly believe Oregon law students should continue to have this same opportunity. While there will continue to be a tremendous need for affordable legal representation, educating a generation of young attorneys who are passionate about domestic violence and helping survivors is a simple and reasonable move toward a solution.

Thank you for your consideration.

Very truly yours,

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