

April 22, 2021

Dear Co-Chairs Johnson, Steiner-Hayward, Rayfield, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Stephanie McClure and I have been working in the Advocacy field supporting Survivors of sexual and relationship violence for over 10 years. Thank you for the opportunity to submit my testimony.

I am writing you to advocate for a \$10 million increase in funding for the Oregon Domestic and Sexual Violence Services fund (ODSVS) within the Crime Victim and Survivor Services Division of the Department of Justice.

Currently, I am the Director of OHSU's Confidential Advocacy Program, while this testimony is my own and I am not speaking as a representative of OHSU, I believe it is important for me to say that throughout the pandemic we have seen a large increase in domestic violence, an increase in lethality risk, and need for shelter services within the populations my program serves. Our program is small and does not have shelter services; we are completely reliant on our community partners across the state who do. Shelter space is hard to come by in Oregon, and without this financial support, we know that OHSU survivors will face additional obstacles to increasing safety in their lives. The OSDVS fund is the only General Fund source of dollars for confidential shelter, support, and safety planning services for survivors.

COVID has increased the demand for services while also making traditional fundraising strategies extremely difficult to employ. We are also hearing that grant funding sources that many of our sexual and domestic violence agencies rely on to provide services to survivors in Oregon will be cut in the coming years (the VOCA grant that funds OHSU's Confidential Advocacy Program for example will not be available after 2022). Advocacy agencies across the state need your support right now so that we can continue to keep our doors open, ensure we have the staff we need to meet the increasing demand for our services, and can continue to provide the programs that survivors across our state use and need.

Please support OSDVS and Survivor Housing funds to your greatest capacity, to ensure that survivors in your communities have access to emergency shelter, expert safety planning, housing stability, and wrap-around support services. These services help victims identify and explore real options to escape violence. These services save lives.

Thank you for your time and your service to the State of Oregon.

Sincerely,

Stephanie McClure

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'SM', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.