

Northwestern School of Law
of Lewis & Clark College

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Senate Judiciary Committee

Re: Universal Representation

I write to express Lewis & Clark law school's enthusiastic support for Universal Representation as a means to provide due process rights to Oregon's immigrant communities and to provide a unified, integrated systematic approach to providing legal representation and social supports. In particular, the law school is excited to support the community-embedded attorneys component of the bill through a public fellowship program.

As you know, Lewis & Clark Law School has a long and rich history of supporting students and alumni interested in public service. We offer a nationally-recognized public interest law program with more than one-third of our recent graduates entering full-time careers in the government or nonprofit sectors. The public fellowship to support attorneys embedded in the community to promote and protect immigrant rights is vital.

The benefits and opportunities of the public fellowships for new attorneys are numerous. These types of fellowships would be highly prized both by our graduates and by the Oregon legal community and create a new opportunity for lawyers from Oregon to work and reside in the communities where they serve. The Universal Representation model's approach to training, mentorship, and day-to-day legal technical assistance and advice through a centrally coordinated and managed system is commendable. In addition to other generally available resources for new lawyers, the fact that the new lawyers in the Universal Representation fellowship program will be treated as a cohort and have access to leadership development, skill-development opportunities and ongoing legal training including mentoring and technical assistance is a tremendous benefit to building a strong, robust, deep and capable bench of lawyers to serve the public interest.

We are excited that Oregon is pioneering this innovative approach and look forward to supporting it.

Sincerely,

Jennifer J. Johnson
Dean and Erskine Wood Sr. Professor of Law