

Submitter: Buck Adams

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee
On Education

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB5525

Co-Chairs Sollman and Ruiz and members of the Committee, my name is Buck Adams and I'm a 3L at Oregon Law. During my 2L year, I completed two semesters with the Domestic Violence Clinic. I chose to join the clinic because I heard from past students that it was the most valuable thing they did while in law school, and this proved to be true for me as well.

I'm here today to urge you to continue supporting this vital State Program. The Clinic plays a unique and irreplaceable role in both Oregon's legal education system and its commitment to survivor safety.

I am a survivor of intimate partner violence. This is one of those topics—like murder, sexual assault, and other violent crime—that is often treated as an abstract concept in law school classrooms. The DV clinic is a rare place where violence is acknowledged as real, because you cannot deny the reality of a survivor sitting in front of you and asking you for help. Supporting these survivors emotionally in the clinic, and legally in court, was an incredibly precious experience to me.

It's entirely possible for law students to make it through all three years of their education without ever setting foot in a courtroom, not to mention being listed as the attorney of record in a legal matter. Because of the DV clinic, my education was grounded in reality. I am so grateful to have the legal experience I do, now that I'm finishing law school and entering the job search. I'm a more competitive applicant, but I also have a feeling of personal confidence that I wouldn't otherwise have. And as a survivor, I have finally gained a sense of agency surrounding my trauma. All of these things and more are what make the DV clinic so valuable.

On behalf of my fellow students, our clients, and the communities we serve, we thank you for your past support of this program and respectfully request your continued investment. I believe that safety is justice; the University of Oregon Domestic Violence Clinic is where education and justice meet, and it changes lives on both sides of the equation.