

Submitter: Sophia Ross
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 Sophia Ross and I'm currently a Law Student at the University of Oregon and am in the Domestic Violence Clinic . I participated in the clinic to gain real-world experience representing clients and to prepare for my future career as a lawyer. I one day hope to practice law as a prosecutor, specifically in the areas of child abuse and domestic violence.

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.

This semester I have gained more experience and knowledge at the Domestic Violence Clinic, than I have during my entire time as a law school student. Not only was I able to practically apply what I have learned in class, but I was able to do so in a manner where I was making a real life impact on people's lives who were and are in crisis situations.

As a student in the clinic, I was able to take on my own cases under the supervision and with the support of Paul Binford. I had the opportunity to see these cases from start to finish. Most recently, I had a trial for a Family Abuse Prevention Act Restraining Order where I was lead on every aspect of the case. From our first client meeting to the day of trial and beyond, I was able to use what I have learned in law school at the Domestic Violence Clinic to provide our client with positive results that helped her feel more safe and protected. Ultimately, I won this trial and our client now has protection for the next two years. Without our clinic, she would have been forced to navigate the legal system on her own.

The Domestic Violence Clinic is a vital and important resource to our community and survivors of domestic violence. Without this clinic, people in crisis situations would be left with very few places to turn. On a personal level, knowing that I was able to use my education and experience in this setting to make an impact on someone's life has been the most rewarding experience of my education and career.

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.