

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

May 16, 2025

The Honorable Hal Rogers
Chairman
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,
Science, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
H-310, The Capitol
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Grace Meng
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,
Science, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
2468 Rayburn House Office Building
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Rogers and Ranking Member Meng:

As you consider appropriations legislation for the coming year, *we respectfully request robust funding* for the Legal Services Corporation (LSC) in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies (CJS) Appropriations bill.

For over *50 years*, LSC and its grantees have been providing civil legal assistance to help constituents in every congressional district including veterans, those affected by opioids and addiction, victims of natural disasters, domestic violence survivors, families with children, homeowners and renters, the disabled, the elderly, and many others. Funding for legal aid promotes individual empowerment and self-reliance by giving people the tools and knowledge to navigate the civil court system to protect and exercise their rights.

LSC has been chronically underfunded for decades. In FY 1994 — 31 years ago — Congress appropriated \$400 million for LSC. Its appropriation has remained relatively flat for 30 years despite much needed increases in recent years because of broad bipartisan support. When adjusting for inflation, the 1980 appropriation of \$300 million would be over \$900 million today. Investment in civil legal aid yields positive economic benefits. Studies have shown that for every dollar invested in legal aid it saves between \$3 and \$12 in cost avoidances and increased productivity of the people assisted.

LSC and its grantees provide essential support for struggling families and ensure that the most vulnerable receive the help that Congress intends through other programs. Fifteen million children and 9 million seniors live below the poverty level. Over 52 million Americans were eligible for LSC-funded services during 2023.

The "justice gap" is the difference between the civil legal needs of low-income Americans and the resources available to meet those needs. In 2022, LSC released an updated Justice Gap study

and the findings show that the justice gap has widened considerably. The unmet needs of low-income Americans increased from 86% in 2017 to 92% in 2021.

LSC and its grantees continue to help vulnerable communities that include:

- **Veterans and Military Families.** During 2023, over 34,000 veterans and their families were helped with a range of legal issues. [LSC's Veterans Task Force](#) released a comprehensive report on strengthening the role of civil legal aid organizations in providing assistance to the estimated 1.6 million veterans eligible for LSC-funded services.
- **Renters and Homeowners.** LSC grantees assisted with over 304,000 housing cases in 2023, yet another increase over the prior year. The ongoing housing insecurity crisis continues to drive more low-income households to seek assistance from legal aid. Housing cases have become the largest case type for the third year in a row because many low-income households are behind on rent. States and localities continue to rely on legal aid to assist the millions facing eviction and foreclosure.
- **Rural Communities.** LSC created a [Rural Justice Task Force](#) to study the challenges of delivering legal services to rural and remote areas. Ten million Americans in rural communities qualify for LSC-funded legal services, yet 86% of rural households requesting assistance received no help. Twenty percent of the nation's population reside in rural areas, yet only two percent of lawyers serve them. Many areas have no lawyers at all.
- **Domestic Violence Survivors.** Domestic violence (DV) cases remain elevated after a steady rise over the past decade. LSC grantees closed nearly over 158,000 cases, one out of every five cases closed, in 2023. Legal services are critical for protecting survivors of domestic violence.
- **Natural Disasters Survivors.** LSC operates a large network of legal aid providers that work with national partners to help natural disaster survivors. During 2023 to 2024, over 20 million people were eligible for services before disaster struck in areas with federally declared disasters. Legal aid assists survivors with a host of short and long-term services including government disaster aid applications and appeals, insurance, housing, family issues, consumer protection from fraud and scams, and replacement of lost legal documents.

Funding for LSC has promoted public-private partnerships between legal aid organizations and private firms and attorneys across the country. Every year, private attorneys provide millions of hours of free legal services to individuals in need. Although pro bono volunteers cannot replace the work of legal aid lawyers, the private bar and others provide a critical resource to address the

civil legal needs of low-income Americans. U.S. Supreme Court Justices have also recognized the importance access to justice. At the 40th anniversary celebration of the establishment of LSC, late Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia remarked, "Equal treatment is the element of justice most fundamental... denial of access to professional legal assistance is denial of equal justice."

We hope you will ensure that the Legal Services Corporation receives robust funding in the FY 2026 CJS Appropriations bill to provide critical legal assistance to eligible Americans.

Sincerely,



Steve Cohen
Member of Congress



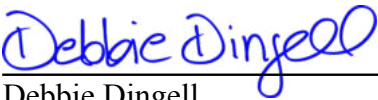
Brian K. Fitzpatrick
Member of Congress



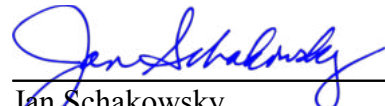
Mary Gay Scanlon
Member of Congress



Laurel M. Lee
Member of Congress



Debbie Dingell
Member of Congress



Jan Schakowsky
Member of Congress



Jim Himes
Member of Congress



Jesús G. "Chuy" García
Member of Congress



Kim Schrier, M.D.
Member of Congress



Nanette Diaz Barragán
Member of Congress



Sharice L. Davids
Member of Congress



Suzan K. DelBene
Member of Congress



Bill Foster
Member of Congress



Jim Tokuda
Member of Congress



Gwen S. Moore
Member of Congress



Stephen F. Lynch
Member of Congress



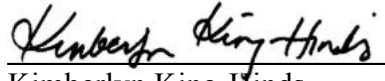
Emanuel Cleaver, II
Member of Congress



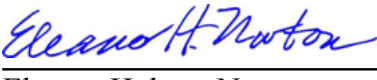
Shri Thanedar
Member of Congress



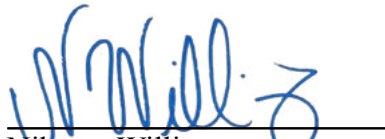
Andrew R. Garbarino
Member of Congress



Kimberlyn King-Hinds
Member of Congress



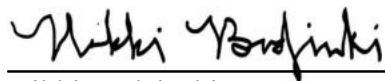
Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress



Nikema Williams
Member of Congress



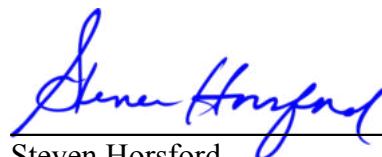
Maxine Waters
Member of Congress




Nikki Budzinski
Member of Congress



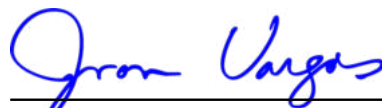
Brendan F. Boyle
Member of Congress



Steven Horsford
Member of Congress
Nevada's Fourth
Congressional District



Danny K. Davis
Member of Congress



Juan Vargas
Member of Congress



Raja Krishnamoorthi
Member of Congress



Mark DeSaulnier
Member of Congress



David Scott
Member of Congress



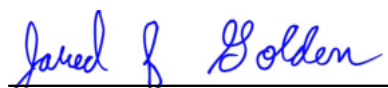
Chellie Pingree
Member of Congress



Gerald E. Connolly
Member of Congress



Kevin Mullin
Member of Congress



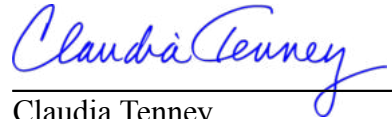
Jared Golden
Member of Congress



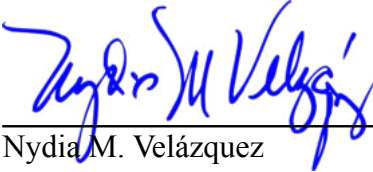
Bradley Scott Schneider
Member of Congress



Glenn "GT" Thompson
Member of Congress



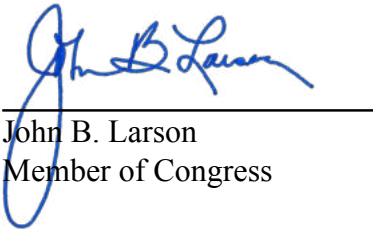
Claudia Tenney
Member of Congress



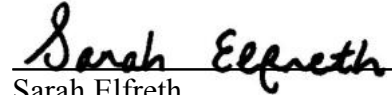
Nydia M. Velázquez
Member of Congress



Jason Crow
Member of Congress



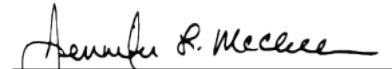
John B. Larson
Member of Congress



Sarah Elfreth
Member of Congress



Mike Bost
Member of Congress



Jennifer L. McClellan
Member of Congress



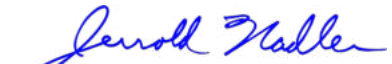
Rashida Tlaib
Member of Congress



Andrea Salinas
Member of Congress



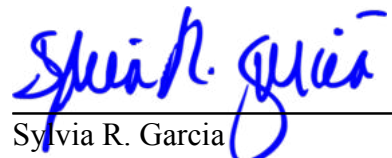
Ayanna Pressley
Member of Congress



Jerrold Nadler
Member of Congress



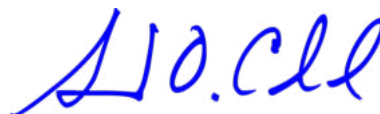
Janelle S. Bynum
Member of Congress



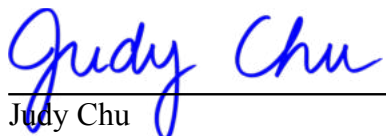
Sylvia R. Garcia
Member of Congress



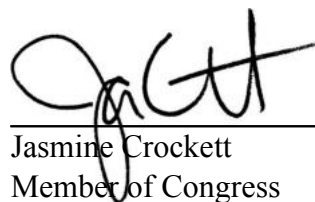
Eric Swalwell
Member of Congress



Salud Carbajal
Member of Congress



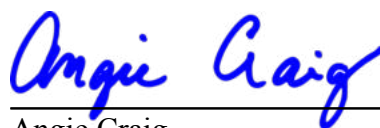
Judy Chu
Member of Congress



Jasmine Crockett
Member of Congress



Cleo Fields
Member of Congress



Angie Craig
Member of Congress



Lizzie Fletcher
Member of Congress



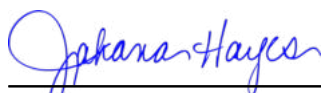
Frank Pallone, Jr.
Member of Congress



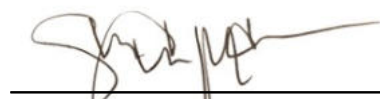
Herbert C. Conaway, Jr.
Member of Congress



Carol D. Miller
Member of Congress



Jahana Hayes
Member of Congress



Sheila Cherfilus-McCormick
Member of Congress



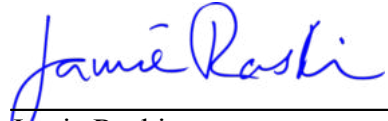
Julia Brownley
Member of Congress



Sean Casten
Member of Congress



Ilhan Omar
Member of Congress



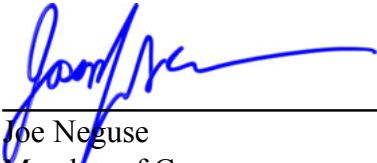
Jamie Raskin
Member of Congress



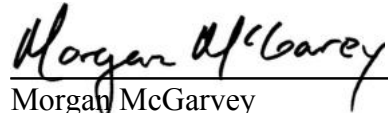
Marilyn Strickland
Member of Congress



Seth Magaziner
Member of Congress



Joe Neguse
Member of Congress



Morgan McGarvey
Member of Congress



April McClain Delaney
Member of Congress



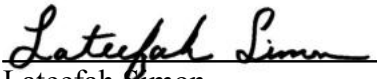
Don Bacon
Member of Congress



Val Hoyle
Member of Congress



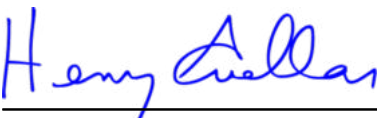
Stacey E. Plaskett
Member of Congress



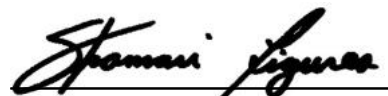
Lateefah Simon
Member of Congress



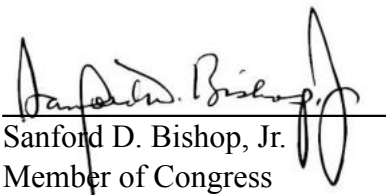
Joyce Beatty
Member of Congress



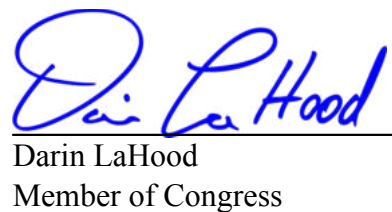
Henry Cuellar
Member of Congress



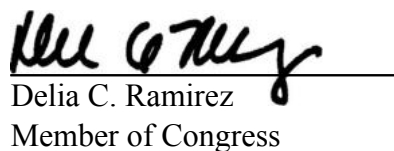
Shomari Figures
Member of Congress



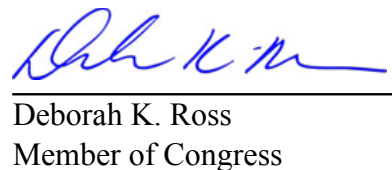
Sanford D. Bishop, Jr.
Member of Congress



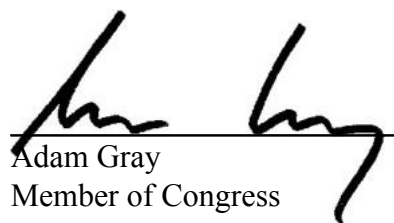
Darin LaHood
Member of Congress



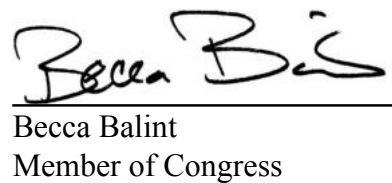
Delia C. Ramirez
Member of Congress



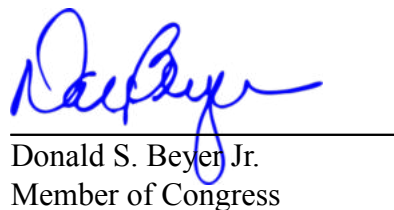
Deborah K. Ross
Member of Congress



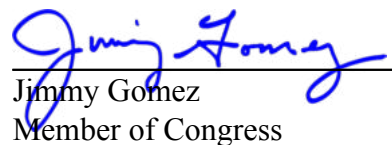
Adam Gray
Member of Congress



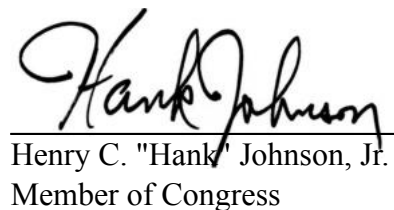
Becca Balint
Member of Congress



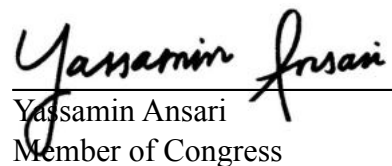
Donald S. Beyer Jr.
Member of Congress



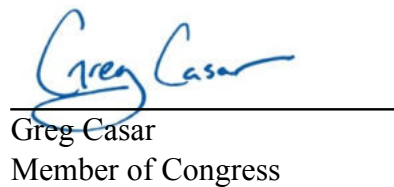
Jimmy Gomez
Member of Congress



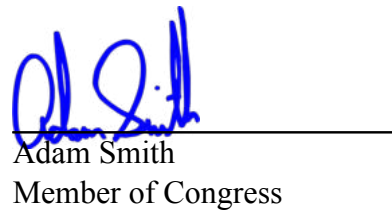
Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.
Member of Congress



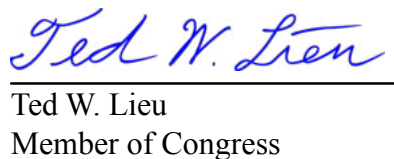
Yassamin Ansari
Member of Congress



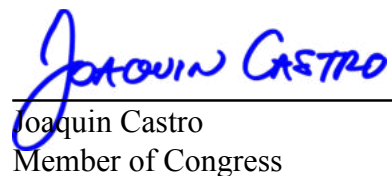
Greg Casar
Member of Congress



Adam Smith
Member of Congress



Ted W. Lieu
Member of Congress



Joaquin Castro
Member of Congress



Diana DeGette
Member of Congress



Robert C. "Bobby" Scott
Member of Congress



J. Luis Correa
Member of Congress



Melanie Stansbury
Member of Congress



Gabe Amo
Member of Congress



Joe Courtney
Member of Congress



Pramila Jayapal
Member of Congress



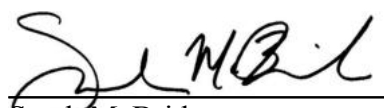
Paul D. Tonko
Member of Congress



Darren Soto
Member of Congress



Chris Pappas
Member of Congress



Sarah McBride
Member of Congress



James P. McGovern
Member of Congress



MARK TAKANO
Member of Congress



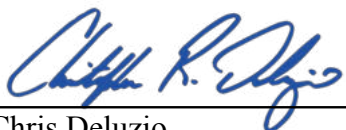
Lloyd Doggett
Member of Congress



Robin L. Kelly
Member of Congress



Dan Goldman
Member of Congress



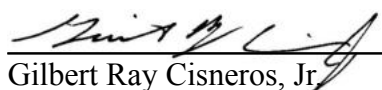
Chris Deluzio
Member of Congress



Emilia Strong Sykes
Member of Congress



Greg Stanton
Member of Congress



Gilbert Ray Cisneros, Jr.
Member of Congress



Laura Friedman
Member of Congress



Vicente Gonzalez
Member of Congress



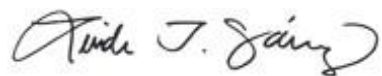
Josh Gottheimer
Member of Congress



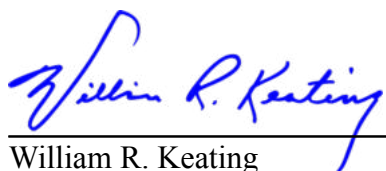
Haley M. Stevens
Member of Congress



Dave Min
Member of Congress



Linda T. Sánchez
Member of Congress



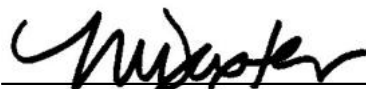
William R. Keating
Member of Congress



Rick Larsen
Member of Congress



Lucy McBath
Member of Congress



Maxine Dexter
Member of Congress



Eric Sorensen
Member of Congress



Julie Johnson
Member of Congress



Suzanne Bonamici
Member of Congress



Terri A. Sewell
Member of Congress



André Carson
Member of Congress



Ami Bera, M.D.
Member of Congress



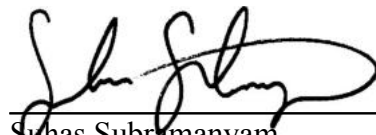
Greg Landsman
Member of Congress



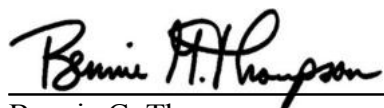
Alma S. Adams, Ph.D.
Member of Congress



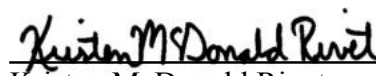
Frederica S. Wilson
Member of Congress



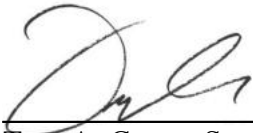
Suhas Subramanyam
Member of Congress



Bennie G. Thompson
Member of Congress



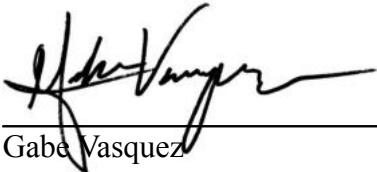
Kristen McDonald Rivet
Member of Congress



Troy A. Carter, Sr.
Member of Congress



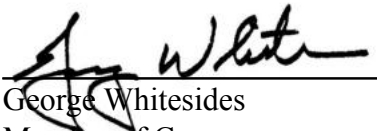
Marc A. Veasey
Member of Congress



Gabe Vasquez
Member of Congress



Seth Moulton
Member of Congress



George Whitesides
Member of Congress



Mikie Sherrill
Member of Congress



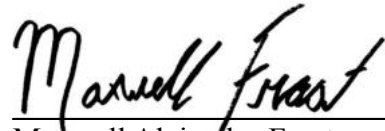
Scott H. Peters
Member of Congress



Maggie Goodlander
Member of Congress



Elise M. Stefanik
Member of Congress



Maxwell Alejandro Frost
Member of Congress



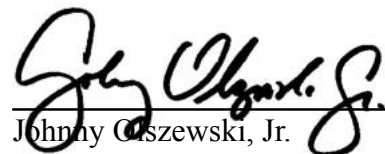
Teresa Leger Fernández
Member of Congress



Pablo José Hernández
Member of Congress



Jared Moskowitz
Member of Congress



Johnny Osceola, Jr.
Member of Congress

A black ink handwritten signature of Derek T. Tran, featuring a large 'D' and 'T'.

Derek T. Tran
Member of Congress

A black ink handwritten signature of Nellie Pou, written in a cursive style.

Nellie Pou
Member of Congress

A blue ink handwritten signature of Jefferson Van Drew, written in a cursive style.

Jefferson Van Drew
Member of Congress