

**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



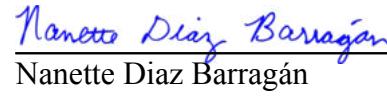
Jim Himes  
Member of Congress



Jesús G. "Chuy" García  
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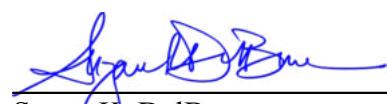
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Bill Foster  
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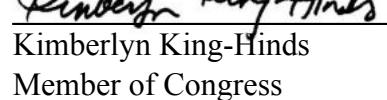
Emanuel Cleaver, II  
Member of Congress



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Member of Congress



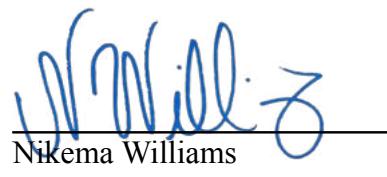
Andrew R. Garbarino  
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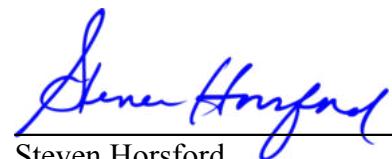
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Nevada's Fourth  
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Janelle S. Bynum

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Sylvia R. Garcia

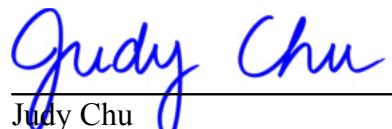
Sylvia R. Garcia  
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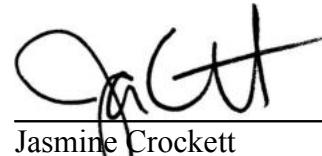
Eric Swalwell  
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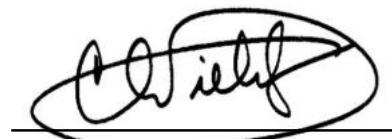
Salud Carbajal  
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Judy Chu  
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Jasmine Crockett  
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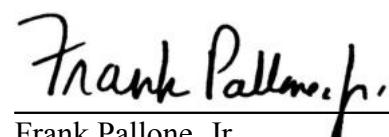
Cleo Fields  
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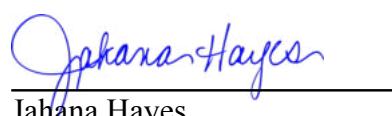
Frank Pallone, Jr.  
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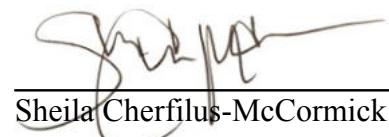
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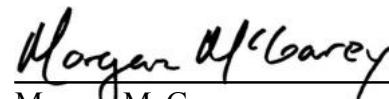
Marilyn Strickland  
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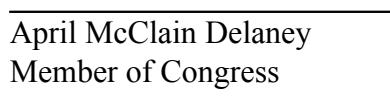
Seth Magaziner  
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Joe Neguse  
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Morgan McGarvey  
Member of Congress



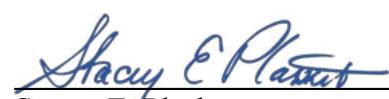
April McClain Delaney  
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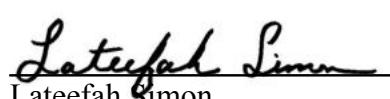
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Val Hoyle  
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Stacey E. Plaskett  
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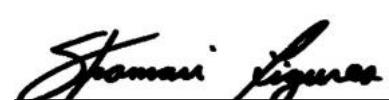
Lateefah Simon  
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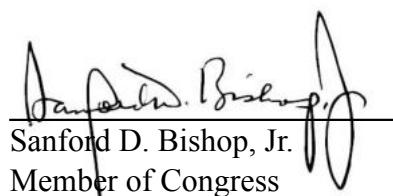
Joyce Beatty  
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Henry Cuellar  
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Shomari Figures  
Member of Congress

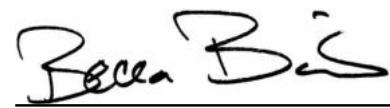
  
Sanford D. Bishop, Jr.  
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Darin LaHood  
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Delia C. Ramirez  
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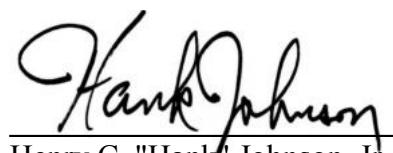
  
Deborah K. Ross  
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Adam Gray  
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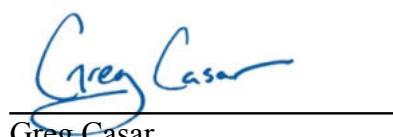
  
Becca Balint  
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Donald S. Beyer Jr.  
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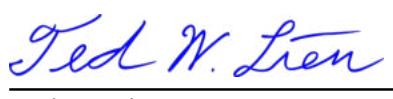
  
Jimmy Gomez  
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Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.  
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Yassamin Ansari  
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Greg Casar  
Member of Congress

  
Adam Smith  
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Ted W. Lieu  
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Joaquin Castro  
Member of Congress



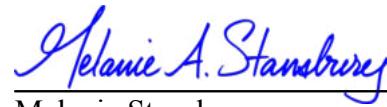
Diana DeGette  
Member of Congress



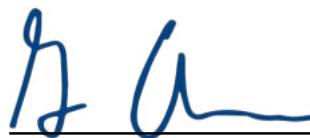
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J. Luis Correa  
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Melanie Stansbury  
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Gabe Amo  
Member of Congress



Joe Courtney  
Member of Congress



Pramila Jayapal  
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Paul D. Tonko  
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Darren Soto  
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Chris Pappas  
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Sarah McBride  
Member of Congress



James P. McGovern  
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MARK TAKANO  
Member of Congress



Lloyd Doggett  
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Robin L. Kelly  
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Dan Goldman  
Member of Congress



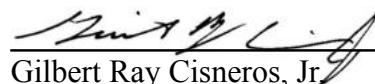
Chris Deluzio  
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Emilia Strong Sykes  
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Greg Stanton  
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Gilbert Ray Cisneros, Jr.  
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Laura Friedman  
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Vicente Gonzalez  
Member of Congress



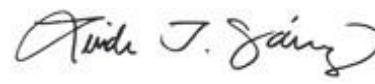
Josh Gottheimer  
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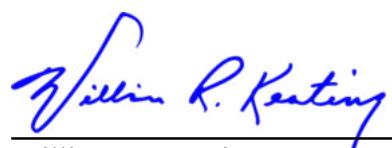
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Dave Min  
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Linda T. Sánchez  
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Lucy McBath

Lucy McBath  
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Maxine Dexter

Maxine Dexter  
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Eric Sorenson

Eric Sorenson  
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Julie Johnson

Julie Johnson  
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Suzanne Bonamici

Suzanne Bonamici  
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Terri A. Sewell

Terri A. Sewell  
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André Carson

André Carson  
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Ami Bera

Ami Bera, M.D.  
Member of Congress

Greg Landsman

Greg Landsman  
Member of Congress

Alma S. Adams

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

Frederica S. Wilson

Frederica S. Wilson  
Member of Congress

Suhas Subramanyam

Suhas Subramanyam  
Member of Congress

Bennie G. Thompson

Bennie G. Thompson  
Member of Congress

Kristen McDonald Rivet

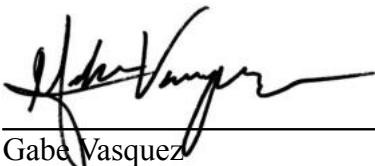
Kristen McDonald Rivet  
Member of Congress



Troy A. Carter, Sr.  
Member of Congress



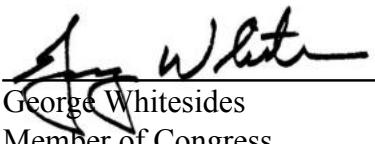
Marc A. Veasey  
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Gabe Vasquez  
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Seth Moulton  
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George Whitesides  
Member of Congress



Mikie Sherrill  
Member of Congress



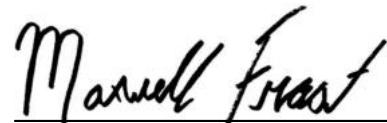
Scott H. Peters  
Member of Congress



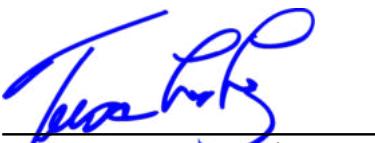
Maggie Goodlander  
Member of Congress



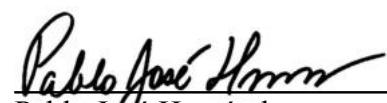
Elise M. Stefanik  
Member of Congress



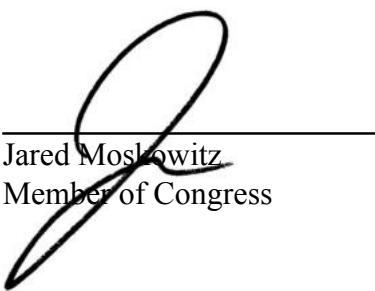
Maxwell Alejandro Frost  
Member of Congress



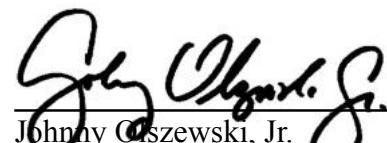
Teresa Leger Fernandez  
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Pablo José Hernández  
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Jared Moskowitz  
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