

State Bar of Wisconsin: Urges restoration of LSC funding

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Madison, WI – President Donald Trump’s proposed 2018 federal budget eliminates funding for the Legal Services Corporation (LSC), a move that would have profoundly negative effects on our most vulnerable citizens and our justice system in Wisconsin.

The LSC provides funding to [Legal Action of Wisconsin](#) and [Wisconsin Judicare](#), two organizations that help provide free legal information, advice, and representation to low income individuals who have civil legal problems in Wisconsin. Together, these two programs received \$5.2 million from LSC, to support their work removing barriers to employment, obtaining child support orders, preventing homelessness, and protecting abuse victims. Last year, they served over 9,400 people in cities and small towns across Wisconsin. LSC funding also allows them to support hundreds of volunteer attorneys who donate over \$1 million of their time.

State Bar of Wisconsin President Fran Deisinger says “the State Bar of Wisconsin is gravely concerned about the proposed elimination of the LSC, the burden that will place on low income families in Wisconsin, and the resulting challenges to our state’s justice system.” Deisinger urges constituents to contact their legislators to [help save LSC](#).

Legal aid helps secure the rights of approximately 1.9 million families annually nationally including military and veterans, older Americans, rural Americans, women (nearly 90 percent of clients) and natural disaster victims.

American Bar Association President Linda A. Klein [issued a statement](#) saying, “Our nation’s core values are reflected in the LSC’s work in securing housing for veterans, freeing seniors from scams, serving rural areas when others won’t, protecting battered women, helping disaster survivors back to their feet, and many others.”

Also supporting the LSC are the heads of more than 150 U.S. law firms, who [told Trump in a letter](#) that eliminating funding would hamper their ability to provide pro bono representation because they partner with legal aid groups receiving LSC funding.

“Eliminating the Legal Services Corp. will not only imperil the ability of civil legal aid organizations to serve Americans in need, it will also vastly diminish the private bar’s capacity to help these individuals,” the letter stated. “The pro bono activity facilitated by LSC funding is exactly the kind of public-private partnership the government should encourage, not eliminate.”