

How to talk to your legislator about civil legal aid funding

- Introduce yourself as a constituent and an attorney
- State that legal services is important to you and thank your legislator for his or her past support
- Tell your legislator that legal aid is in crisis and strongly urge him or her to request \$17 million in funding for MLAC in FY15, a \$4 million increase over this year's budget
- Ask your legislator to make this funding request one of his or her top three budget priorities

Supporting facts:

- Interest on Lawyers Trust Accounts (IOLTA) revenue has decreased by 85%, from \$17 million in Fiscal Year 2008 to a projected \$2.6 million in FY14.
- Legal aid programs are forced to turn away at least half of the eligible people who request help.
- Funding legal aid is a sound economic investment, saving the state money by bringing clients federal benefits such as disability payments and food stamps.
- It is critical for people to have lawyers; legal representation is essential to the fair and efficient administration of justice.
- People represented by legal aid are better prepared to protect their basic needs for housing and income.



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