

## SALT STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF LEGAL SERVICES CORPORATION

The Society of American Law Teachers (SALT) writes to express serious alarm and deep concern about the White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB) proposal to eliminate funding for the Legal Services Corporation (LSC). Since 1974, LSC has provided essential civil legal services to low-income Americans. LSC is often the sole lifeline for vulnerable people with civil legal problems that affect their health, housing, safety, and economic security. We emphatically urge Congress and the Administration to preserve LSC funding.

SALT is a community of law teachers, law school administrators, librarians, academic support experts, students and affiliates that has worked for more than 40 years to improve the legal profession and the law academy and to expand the power of and access to law for underserved communities. Many of our members began their careers as attorneys in LSC-funded legal aid programs and know first-hand the importance of civil legal aid and its vital role in protecting the health and well-being of low-income Americans.

LSC plays a critical role in preserving our nation's promise of equal justice under law and the effective functioning of our adversary system of justice. Indeed, one in five Americans are eligible for civil legal aid. Those who receive civil legal aid are among the most vulnerable members of our society: the elderly, veterans, victims of violence, victims of natural disasters, and rural Americans. The simple premise of LSC and civil legal aid is that a person's economic status should not determine the quality of the justice they receive.

Given the importance of civil legal aid, it is unsurprising that LSC has historically had a solid foundation of bi-partisan support in Congress. There is an LSC office in every congressional district in America and the agency provides services to 1.9 million people each year. Continued funding for LSC also makes basic fiscal sense: LSC delivers far more economic benefits to the country than what it costs to support the program.

The membership of SALT strongly urges Congress to support continued funding for LSC and to preserve the vital role of civil legal aid in the effective functioning of our justice system.