

September 22, 2025

To all Members of Congress:

The leadership of the Four Corners Access to Justice Commissions write to express our strong support for the Legal Services Corporation (“LSC”) and to request continued funding in Fiscal Year 2026. Investment in LSC is essential to ensure that our legal system works for all Americans, regardless of their ability to pay for an attorney.

The Four Corners Access to Justice Commissions — representing Commissions in Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico and Utah — offer this strong support with a shared conviction that LSC funds are critically needed to address the “justice gap” between the civil legal needs of low-income individuals and families across the United States and the resources available to meet those needs.

Legal service providers are often the last safety net for those on the brink of losing economic security. In each of our states, our most under-resourced and vulnerable citizens struggle to meet significant civil legal needs. Every day, civil legal aid organizations represent and provide help to people who are in crisis: individuals on the verge of losing their homes, their children, as well as their livelihoods. These groups also help veterans secure rightful benefits, support disaster victims rebuilding their lives, assist domestic violence survivors seeking safety, and protect seniors from scams and financial exploitation, among many other things.

LSC has remained an effective and efficient partner in addressing these challenges through its support of 130 independent legal aid organizations, which operate more than 900 offices in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and United States territories. LSC distributes almost 95 percent of its federal appropriations directly to these organizations, and their programs assist millions of hardworking Americans every year in every Congressional District across the United States.

Some recent examples of LSC’s indispensable work in this region include:

- In Arizona, LSC-funded organizations helped provide legal services to more than 24,500 Arizonans in 2024. These services included helping victims of domestic violence, Arizonans 65 years old and older and preserving or stabilizing housing for Arizonans. These services are enormously helpful, but there is much more to be done, recognizing that more than 1,000,000 Arizonans are eligible for legal aid services.
- Colorado’s LSC-funded organization — Colorado Legal Services — closed 8,452 cases in 2024, serving Coloradans on matters ranging from housing (over 400 cases), family law with a special focus on domestic violence prevention (1,464

cases), consumer cases (1,062 cases), to many others. Colorado Legal Services is celebrating its 100th anniversary in 2025, commemorating a full century of service to low-income and senior Coloradans.

- In New Mexico, New Mexico Legal Aid (NMLA) provided legal services and closed 4,391 cases in 2024, assisting people with civil legal needs, including housing, employment, consumer issues, health, education, and income maintenance. Over 10,000 people were served in the closed cases. Among the closed cases, NMLA served seniors in 858 cases and veterans in 202 cases. In one case, an elderly man was being evicted from a home he paid for after the sellers forged his signature on a rental contract and tried to evict him. NMLA successfully argued that the contract was forged, and the client was awarded the deed to his home. NMLA also assisted a disabled veteran in keeping his home after his housing voucher was unlawfully terminated. In another case, NMLA helped a 64-year-old client who was trying to dispute fraudulent charges on his credit card. In that case, the client depended on Social Security Disability, and the charges affected the client's financial security. Thanks to the efforts of NMLA, the client received a \$75,000 settlement, bringing great financial relief and satisfaction that the injustice was finally resolved.
- In Utah, LSC-funded organizations helped disadvantaged Utahns by providing civil legal aid in cases that impact basic needs — safety, housing, income, health insurance, family and access to services. Last year these organizations enabled 33,000 Utahns to obtain legal assistance they otherwise would not of had access to.

Simply stated, LSC is at the frontline for protecting essential access to justice throughout America and, in particular, the Four Corners states. It has demonstrated prudent stewardship of taxpayer dollars in providing critical civil legal help to millions of our fellow Americans and their families — help they otherwise would not receive.

There are tremendous ripple effects from the LSC dollars in our communities. Legal aid professionals help families obtain adequate nutrition and health. Civil legal assistance can help keep people housed and employed, and to help those most vulnerable from being victimized. Critically, LSC funds reduce the need for public spending and assistance. Every \$1 spent on civil legal aid returns \$7 in economic benefits to communities.

Fundamentally, funding for LSC is integral to the fair administration of justice and the rule of law. There cannot be justice without access to quality representation. And the need for legal assistance for those most vulnerable is on the rise for many Americans. Now more than ever, is the time to invest in LSC funding.

We urge Congress to fully support the 2026 budget proposal and prioritize funding for LSC. By doing so, we reaffirm our nation's commitment to equal access to justice and ensure that legal aid organizations can continue their invaluable work.

Thank you for your leadership and consideration of this critical issue.

Sincerely,

Samuel A. Thumma
Chair
Arizona Commission on Access to Justice



Kimberly Gent
Chair
Colorado Access to Justice Commission



Hon. Erin B. O'Connell
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New Mexico Commission on Access to Justice



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