



THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF SOUTH CAROLINA
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TESTIMONY TO THE HOUSE WAYS AND MEANS SUBCOMMITTEE ON LAW ENFORCEMENT AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE

24 January 2017

Mr. Chairman and members, thank you for this opportunity to speak with you today. I am Lynn Teague of the League of Women Voters of South Carolina. You don't often see our organization in subcommittee hearings on budgets, but there are some aspects of government funding that are especially important to us.

Adequate funding for the Judiciary is prominent among these. This branch of government bears enormous responsibility for the wellbeing of our citizens and our businesses. Access to justice matters to us all and demands a responsibly funded judiciary.

The judicial budget is usually discussed in terms of the number of judges relative to cases. Caseloads matter of course, they matter a lot. We know that this concern is always before this subcommittee. We are sure that this subcommittee is also concerned about insuring that judicial salaries are sufficient to attract and retain qualified judges. However, our message today is that we also ask you to pay attention to insuring adequate support staffing and operations funding to make our judges effective in their jobs. From paper clips to computers to IT staff, the judiciary has a big job to do that requires resources. Judges are decision-makers and their efficient functioning is entirely dependent on the presentation, sharing and preservation of the information that is the basis of their decisions.

The name of your Ways and Means Committee sums up what we are asking for today. The League of Women Voters asks that you insure that our Judiciary does indeed have the ways and means to insure timely and effective access to justice for all of our citizens.

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