

Kentucky Governor proposes cuts to civil legal aid

Supreme Court justice and advocates fear Kentuckians will suffer from civil legal aid cuts in Governor Matt Bevin's budget proposal.

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LOUISVILLE, Ky. (WHAS11) - Legal advocates warn that a cut in Governor Matt Bevin's budget proposal could limit civil legal help to thousands of Kentuckians including the elderly, veterans and domestic violence victims.

Tuesday, a State Supreme Court Justice made a plea to lawmakers to find the funds as the remaining members of the Kentucky High Court sat in the audience in support.

Some Kentuckians impacted by the cuts, according to Justice Michelle Keller, are those claiming to have been victimized by Eric Conn. Conn is the Kentucky lawyer recently captured in Central America and returned to the Bluegrass to face justice.

Justice Keller said that many of the thousands of potential victims are financially destitute, in need of civil legal aid lawyers to obtain benefits. The Governor's budget plan allotted zero dollars for the civil legal aid program.

All 7 of Kentucky's Supreme Court Justices sat in on Tuesday's committee hearing. At stake are \$750,000 in funding for the Access to Justice Board which is one of the 70 program cuts announced by Governor Matt Bevin.

Those fighting for the funding say what's really at stake goes well beyond dollars, it strikes at the effort to help those less fortunate seeking justice with nowhere else to turn.

"The greatest number of cases that we do, across all four programs, are domestic violence cases which appear in Family Court," Joshua Crabtree, Executive Director

for Legal Aid of the Bluegrass, said.

Four regional civil legal aid agencies do receive outside funding, Justice Keller explained, but state funding makes it possible for them to handle more cases and the need goes well beyond those for whom they can provide even with current funding. [READ MORE](#)

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