



January 13, 2020

Honorable Eli Bebout  
Honorable Bob Nicholas  
Joint Appropriations Committee  
200 West 24th Street  
Capitol Building, E201  
Cheyenne, WY 82002

Re: College of Law –Clinical and Experiential Learning Facility Addition (Letter #17)

Dear Chairman Bebout, Chairman Nicholas and members of the Joint Appropriations Committee,

The University College of Law is one of the few law schools in the nation that guarantees its students a clinical experience, enabling all law students the opportunity to practice law and work on real-world cases before they graduate. In the 2018-2019 academic year, more than 120 students participated in the College of Law's student legal clinics, totaling more than 18,000 hours of free legal service for indigent Wyoming citizens.

Each year, students working in clinics under faculty supervision provide representation to indigent Wyoming citizens in over 400 cases throughout Wyoming's 23 counties, totaling approximately \$3,500,000 in free legal services.

The College of Law's main facility was constructed in 1977 and is now outdated and inadequate to meet current clinical and experiential learning standards in legal education. The UW Office Annex space which houses the larger legal clinics is located off campus and has been deemed inadequate by the American Bar Association (ABA). Additionally, the new ABA requirement that all law students complete six credit hours of clinical experience for graduation will result in an increase in the number of students participating in legal clinics.

The proposed new facility addition and renovation cost is approximately \$18-20,000,000. The College has raised \$5,000,000 privately over the past 18 months, which is the largest sum of money raised by any individual college, and the University has reportedly committed \$4,000,000

in major maintenance costs. While the College will continue to fundraise privately, it is seeking state support for the \$12,000,000 dollar gap required for the project.

The building design was approved by the University Board of Trustees in September 2019, with construction anticipated to begin in Fall 2020 pending funding approval.

Given the impact of the student legal clinic program to the state, I recommend consideration of funding the new facility space.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Gordon", written in a cursive style.

Mark Gordon  
Governor