

NATIONAL LAW CENTER ON HOMELESSNESS & POVERTY

The National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty: Lawyers Working to End Homelessness

Each year, more than 3 million people experience homelessness, including 1.3 million children. Beginning in the early 1980s, the number of homeless Americans grew dramatically. The face of homelessness became diverse. It began to include mothers and fathers, sons and daughters, and racial and ethnic minorities. *One-third of the homeless population is made up of families.*

The mission of the National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty is to serve as the legal arm of the nationwide movement to prevent and end homelessness. The Law Center is the only national legal advocacy organization dedicated to this cause. Our attorneys go into courtrooms and the halls of our legislatures to protect the needs of society's most vulnerable members.

Through impact litigation, policy advocacy, and public education, we address the root causes of homelessness at the local, state, and national levels.

Changing Laws & Changing Lives

The Law Center makes a crucial difference in the lives of millions of homeless men, women, and children across the country. Our programs:

- Ensure that homeless children are able to go to school
- Prevent domestic violence survivors from becoming homeless
- Help impoverished families when they are made homeless by natural disasters
- Hold the U.S. government accountable until the human right to housing is a reality for all
- Protect homeless people from discrimination based on their status
- Create homes and communities for homeless people with unused government property

Key Accomplishments

Recent major accomplishments include:

- **Helping create a federal plan to end homelessness.** Following months of advocacy by the Law Center, Congress directed the federal government to create the first-ever Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness. The Law Center helped develop the plan, providing key guidance on housing and civil rights issues. And since the plan was released to the public in June 2010, the Law Center has worked with the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness to ensure its vigorous implementation.
- **Protecting the right of children to a good, stable education.** In a suburb of Pittsburgh, the Law Center fought successfully to enroll homeless children wrongfully declared ineligible because they were sheltered outside the district. As part of the settlement, the state Board of Education issued new guidelines to prevent this from happening to the more than 43,000 other homeless students living in the state each year.
- **Protecting tenants from wrongful eviction.** The Law Center was instrumental in passing and later extending the [Protecting Tenants at Foreclosure Act](#), which provides unprecedented federal protections to tenants of foreclosed properties and has prevented homelessness for thousands of families. Currently, the Law Center is working with the National Association of Realtors to ensure the law is properly implemented, collaborating on a public education campaign that will ensure both tenants and owners of foreclosed properties understand the Act's protections.
- **Getting the U.S. government to acknowledge its human rights obligations.** The Law Center conducted aggressive advocacy around the UN Human Rights Council's Universal Periodic Review of U.S. human rights policy. Following testimony by the Law Center explaining how the failure of the U.S. to address its affordable housing crisis constitutes a human rights violation, the UN identified this as an urgent matter in

its recommendations to the U.S. The U.S. agreed, acknowledging for the first time in history that homelessness implicates its human rights obligations.

- **Protecting homeless persons' civil rights.** The Law Center stands up for the basic dignity and rights of homeless and poor people by challenging city efforts to criminally punish people for living in public – even though they have no place else to go. It also challenges laws that punish organizations offering food to homeless and poor people in public places. In 2010, the Law Center won victories on these issues in communities across the country, including: Seattle, WA; Salt Lake City, UT; San Antonio, TX; and Charlottesville, FL.
- **Leveraging over \$2 million in pro bono support from law firms in 2009.** The Law Center partners with major law firms to enforce the rights and improve the lives of homeless and poor Americans.

Major Funders

The Law Center has formed a variety of partnerships to accomplish our mission of ending and preventing homelessness. Listed below are some of the Law Center's major institutional and corporate funders in 2011:

Bank of America; Columbia Legal Services; Freddie Mac Foundation; Nicholas and Celeste Karamatsoukas Family Foundation; Oak Foundation; Oakwood Foundation; Open Society Institute; U.S. Human Rights Fund; and W.K. Kellogg Foundation.

LEAP (Lawyers' Executive Advisory Partners to Prevent & End Homelessness)

LEAP is a national legal community philanthropic effort to help homeless and poor Americans achieve self-sufficiency. LEAP members provide financial support and pro bono legal services to help the Law Center prevent and end homelessness. LEAP members include the nation's top law firms. The following firms and individuals are LEAP members:

John Grisham (Honorary Chair); Akin, Gump, Strauss, Hauer & Feld LLP; Bruce Rosenblum; Covington & Burling LLP; Dechert LLP; DLA Piper; Fried, Frank, Harris, Shriver & Jacobson LLP; Goodwin Procter LLP; Hogan Lovells; Jenner & Block LLP; Katten Muchin Rosenman LLP; Latham & Watkins LLP; Schulte Roth & Zabel LLP; Sidley Austin LLP; Simpson Thacher & Bartlett LLP; Sullivan & Cromwell LLP; and WilmerHale.

National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty Board of Directors

*affiliations for identification purposes only

Vasiliki Tsaganos

Chairperson

Fried, Frank, Harris, Shriver & Jacobson

Edward McNicholas

Vice-Chairperson

Sidley Austin LLP

Mona Touma

Secretary

Goldman, Sachs and Co

Michael Allen

Treasurer

Microsoft Corporation

Kenneth S. Aneckstein

DLA Piper

William Breakey, M.D.

Johns Hopkins University

Peter H. Bresnan

Simpson Thacher & Bartlett LLP

Tonya Y. Bullock

MD Dept. of Human Resources

Bruce Casino

Katten Muchin Rosenman LLP

Dennis Dorgan

Fundraising Consultant

Roderick DeArment

Covington & Burling

Sally Dworak-Fisher

Public Justice Center

Howard Godnick

Schulte Roth & Zabel LLP

Father Alexander Karloutsos

Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America

Kirsten Johnson-Obey

Porterfield & Lowenthal LLC

Pamela Lynn Malester

Office for Civil Rights
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (retired)

Tashena Middleton Moore

Community Volunteer

Margaret Pfeiffer

Sullivan & Cromwell

G.W. Rolle

Pinellas County Coalition for the Homeless

Bruce Rosenblum

The Carlyle Group

Jeffrey Simes

Goodwin Procter LLP

Maria Foscarinis

President and Executive Director