

IN JUST TIMES

a publication of the

NATIONAL LAW CENTER
ON HOMELESSNESS & POVERTY



Changing Laws, Changing Lives

May 2017

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Dear Friends —

The [Housing Not Handcuffs Campaign](#) will be the focus of this year's [National Forum on the Human Right to Housing](#), and I hope you will join us there.

It's an urgent and critically important topic. How will the change in Administration affect the Campaign—and our work to end and prevent homelessness overall? Many of us are gravely concerned about proposed [dramatic cuts in funding](#) for housing, health care and other social programs, as well as announced plans to roll back criminal justice reform.



Maria Foscarinis
Executive Director

But we are also encouraged by increased activism, including at the state and local level. In Delaware, for example, Campaign members are pushing forward with the [Homeless Individuals' Bill of Rights](#), introduced in March, to protect individuals experiencing

homelessness from discrimination while in public and while seeking employment, housing, and temporary shelter.

In Colorado, while the [Right to Rest Act](#) again did not win enough votes to be reported out committee, our regional and local partners and Campaign members are already planning next year's efforts. And the court challenge to [Denver's Urban Camping Ban](#) scored an important win when the judge granted homeless plaintiffs' motion for class certification.

There is much we can do in the courts, at the state and local level to move forward, as we also, of course.

More details on the Forum and Registration are [here](#). I hope to see you there!

In Memoriam: Michael Stoops

We mourn the loss of Michael Stoops, a longtime advocate and friend, who passed away on May 1, 2017. I met Michael in the mid-1980s, when I joined the National Coalition for the Homeless to first establish and then head its Washington DC office, and Michael was a Coalition Board member based in Portland, Oregon. During the winter of 1986-87, when Mitch Snyder and I were lobbying Congress for what would become the McKinney-Vento Act, Michael came to join our effort, and spent months living on a heat grate with Mitch. Later, in 1988, he moved to Washington permanently, becoming a staff member in my office. After I left the Coalition in 1989 to start the Law Center, Michael continued at the Coalition and became a colleague, friend, and, as he liked often to remind me, a fellow "old-timer."

Michael was a relentless, indefatigable advocate, too hardworking for his own good. He was soft-spoken, but fiercely determined. He single-handedly organized advocates across the country, and kept them going, with his constant travel and support. It's work that is vitally important to our movement, and his contributions were immense. Michael, we will sorely miss you. And the work continues.

Read Megan Husting's beautiful remembrance [here](#).

2017 LEAP Luncheon Hosted By Simpson Thacher & Bartlett



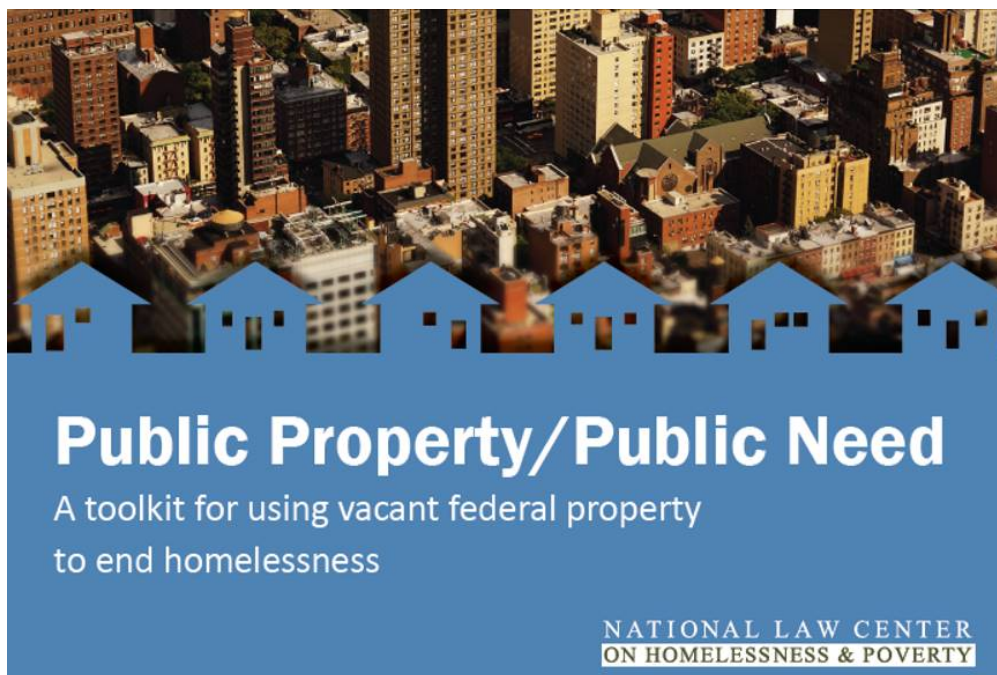
With over forty attendees representing twenty legal firms, the 2017 LEAP ([Lawyers' Executive Advisory Partners](#)) Luncheon was held Friday, May 12, 2017 hosted by [Simpson Thacher & Bartlett](#) at their law offices in Washington, DC. The luncheon was kicked off by Peter Thomas, chairman of LEAP and managing partner at Simpson Thacher & Bartlett, and Maria Foscarinis, executive director of the Law Center, who both formally welcomed current LEAP member firms and encouraged new firms to join LEAP and support the vital work of the Law Center.

Attendees of the luncheon were treated to speeches by Kimberly Leefatt from Latham & Watkins, Chris Healey from Simpson Thacher, and Richard Hertling from Covington & Burling, who all have done pro bono work with the Law Center on homelessness cases.

Introduced by LEAP Corporate Advisor and Vice-Chair of the Law Center Board of Directors Bruce Rosenblum, the luncheon featured a keynote speech by the Honorable Donald B. Verrilli, former solicitor general of the United States who served in the Obama administration from 2011 to 2016. Verrilli's remarks touched upon the current political debate in Congress over healthcare and how it related to the Law Center's work on ending homelessness. He stated, "We are having a debate about what we stand for as a country, about what kind of people we are, when we talk about keeping faith with our constitution's commitment to secure the blessings of liberty, to ourselves and our posterity."

Photos and video from the LEAP Luncheon can be found on the Law Center’s Facebook page at [facebook.com/homelessnesslaw](https://www.facebook.com/homelessnesslaw). Special thanks to the [Law Center Board of Directors](#) who attended, our hosts [Simpson Thacher & Bartlett](#), and to this year’s [LEAP member firms](#) for their generous support!

New Release: Public Property/Public Need



On April 25th, the Law Center released its latest report, “[Public Property/Public Need: A Toolkit for Using Vacant Property to End Homelessness](#).” The report is designed to help local governments and nonprofit organizations obtain surplus federal property for homeless housing and services under Title V of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. The Title V program provides eligible homeless service providers with a right of first refusal to properties no longer needed by the federal government – including warehouses, administrative buildings, and vacant land. Best of all, the federal government is required to deed or lease these properties to successful applicants for free.

While the Title V program has been in place since 1987, it was amended under the Federal Assets Sale and Transfer Act of 2016 to bifurcate the application process and make some key improvements to the program. Most critical among those improvements is the clarification that permanent housing, with or without supportive services, is an eligible use for surplus property transferred under the program. Permanent housing is the most cost-effective,

sensible, and sustainable solution to homelessness, and this change to the law will help local governments and nonprofit agencies obtain millions of dollars in unneeded federal assets to end homelessness in their communities.

To date, over 2 million people are served each year in approximately 500 buildings and nearly 900 acres of land that have been transferred to cities and other eligible homeless service providers under Title V. Yet, this is a small fraction of the Title V program's untapped potential given the number of properties made available through the Title V program each year. Indeed, thousands of properties are advertised each year on the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's ("HUD") website.

To learn more about the Title V program and how to successfully apply for federal property, please check out our [new toolkit](#) and [webinar](#) featuring Juanita Perry at HUD, Bruce Rosenblum of The Carlyle Group, and Paul Varnado of Morrison Foerster, and our senior attorney, Tristia Bauman.

**Register Now: Housing Not Handcuffs -
National Forum On The Human Right To Housing**

NATIONAL LAW CENTER
ON HOMELESSNESS & POVERTY

Save the Date!

**HOUSING
NOT HANDCUFFS**

National Forum on the
Human Right to Housing

June 6-7, 2017 • Washington, D.C.
hosted by Sidley Austin LLP

nlchp.org

#Right2HousingForum

Criminalization of homelessness is on the rise, and funding for housing and services is threatened as never before. As advocates, we need to build and strengthen in order to meet increasing challenges at the local, state, and federal levels. Building on the work of our 2015 and 2016 forums, this year's gathering will focus on increasing the reach of the newly-launched [Housing Not Handcuffs](#) national campaign, which fights against the criminalization of homelessness—and for adequate housing instead.

The forum will include discussions on a number of important topics, from the intersectional forms of discrimination that result in the criminalization of homelessness to the models of advocacy that are succeeding in cities and counties. The goal and focus of the forum, however, will be strategizing and planning our collective work moving forward.

Breakfast is included both days and lunch will be provided on Tuesday, June 6th. There will also be a reception the evening of Tuesday, June 6th.

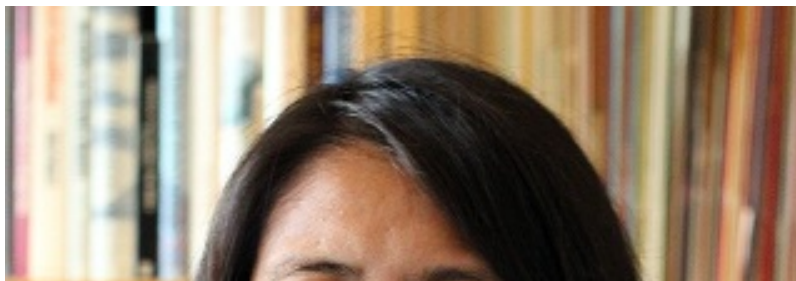
The National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty places high value on the participation of people who are currently experiencing, or who have formerly experienced, homelessness, people who have low income, people from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds, those who identify as LGBTQ, and grassroots activists around the country. If cost is an impediment to attending the forum, we encourage you to apply for a travel scholarship. [Click here for more information about travel scholarships.](#)

To learn more about our Housing Not Handcuffs Forum and to register for this event, please [c l i c k](#) [h e r e](#) .

The Law Center thanks [Sidley Austin, LLP](#) for hosting the 2017 National Forum on the Human Right to Housing.

Welcome To The Team, Maggie!

We are happy to welcome Maggie Ardiente to the Law Center as our new Director of Development and Communications. Learn more about Maggie below:





“As one of seven children of working-class immigrant parents, I understand the barriers families face when they lack affordable housing and access to quality education. The Law Center addresses the root problems that lead to homelessness and poverty and seeks to create impactful, lasting change. I'm proud to work with a dynamic team to raise awareness of the Law Center's vital work so that homeless individuals and families know they have a champion for their rights.”

Maggie Ardiente is the Director of Development and Communications for the National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty, where she leads the organization's fundraising efforts through annual and major gifts, special events, corporate and law firm giving, and foundation relations. She also manages the organization's public and media relations and online presence.

Maggie previously worked for twelve years as the director of development and communications at the American Humanist Association and the senior editor of its online news site, TheHumanist.com. She appeared on or has been quoted in Fox News, NPR, *The Washington Post*, *The Huffington Post*, and other local and national media. She's also served on the board of directors of the Secular Student Alliance and the Humanist Institute.

Originally from Virginia Beach, Virginia, Maggie graduated with a B.S. in sociology from James Madison University and is a member of the Association of Fundraising Professionals.

Changing Laws. Changing Lives.

The National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty (the Law Center) is the only national organization dedicated solely to using the power of the law to end and prevent homelessness.

With the support of a large network of pro bono lawyers, we address

the immediate and long-term needs of people who are homeless or at risk through outreach and training, advocacy, impact litigation, and public education.

www.nlchp.org