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Continuing Resolution Keeps LSC at Current Funding Levels until March

LSC will continue to operate at fiscal year 2008 funding levels until March 6, 2009, or until LSC's regular FY 2009 appropriation is enacted, according to the continuing appropriations resolution (H.R. 2638) passed by Congress and signed into law by President Bush on September 30. The resolution was necessary to prevent the shutdown of the federal government, since Congress had not passed any of the 12 annual spending bills before FY 2009 started on October 1. LSC received \$350.5 million in FY 2008, but is still looking forward to the possibility of an 11 percent increase for 2009, as the appropriations committees in the House and Senate have recommended \$390 million for LSC. However, Congress is not expected to revisit the appropriations process until next year.

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New Report Details Unmet Civil Legal Needs of D.C.'s Poor

LSC President Helaine M. Barnett joined top officials from all three branches of Washington, D.C.'s government to celebrate the release of a new report from the city's Access to Justice Commission detailing the unmet civil legal needs of the poor in our nation's capital. Mayor Adrian M. Fenty, City Council Chairman Vincent C. Gray, D.C. Superior Court Chief Judge Lee Satterfield, D.C. Court of Appeals Chief Judge Eric Washington, as well as



LSC President Helaine M. Barnett and

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D.C. Bar President Robert J. Spagnoletti and Commission Chairman Peter B. Edelman, all highlighted the critical importance of the new report, *Justice for All?: An Examination of the Civil Legal Needs of the District of Columbia's Low-Income Community*, at an event sponsored by the law firm of DLA Piper on Oct. 7. The firm took a lead role in preparing the report by appointing numerous partners, associates, and support staff to research and draft the report pro bono.

D.C. Access to Justice Commission Chairman Peter B. Edelman hold a copy of the report.

Year 2006

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The report combines hard data from legal aid providers and the courts with valuable insight from government agencies and community-based organizations to present a comprehensive assessment of the civil legal needs of the city's poor, the need for dramatically increased resources to address them, and strategies to secure those resources. Among the report's findings are that more than 95 percent of parties in domestic violence and landlord/tenant cases are unrepresented by an attorney, physical and mental disabilities and limited English proficiency often create additional challenges to seeking justice, the poor are often unaware of their legal rights and lack knowledge regarding the availability of legal aid.

"All of us at the Legal Services Corporation salute the hard work by the D.C. Access to Justice Commission and DLA Piper in conducting this comprehensive study and shining a spotlight on the unmet civil legal needs of the District of Columbia's low-income communities and the devastating consequences of unaddressed civil legal matters," said Barnett.

Click here for more information. (📎 37k)

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LSC Hosts National Foreclosure Conference Call

The foreclosure crisis is having a devastating impact on many individuals and families in low-income communities and more and more organizations are working to deal with this crisis. In an effort to identify opportunities for collaboration, LSC sponsored a conference call to discuss legal aid and equal justice initiatives to address the foreclosure crisis.

Participants on the September 18 teleconference said demand for legal services is growing and that some organizations lack an adequate number of attorneys to handle their increased foreclosure workload and are reaching out to the private bar for pro bono help. Some participants also expressed concern about how they will be able to sustain their foreclosure projects if grants and other funds fall short in coming years.

Sixteen organizations joined in the teleconference, including representatives of