



February 4, 2019

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Ms. Jennifer Reed
Director, Office of Budget and Performance Management
John A. Wilson Building, Suite 513
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20004
sent via e-mail: jennifer.reed@dc.gov

RE: FY 2020 Access to Justice Initiative Funding

Dear Ms. Reed:

As you know, civil legal services are a vital resource for District residents living in poverty. The District government has long recognized this critical need and since 2007 has provided vital financial support for civil legal services through the Access to Justice Initiative. In the years that have followed, these funds have advanced access to justice for countless District residents and expanded the geographic and substantive reach of our civil legal services network. In fiscal year 2018, the District appropriated new, additional funding to create the Civil Legal Counsel Projects Program, a landmark effort to provide legal services in eviction proceedings, a significant step towards maintaining District families in their homes. Taken together, these complementary programs represent an integrated and cohesive investment in access to justice.

Not only do these initiatives reflect the District's commitment to access to justice, they also place the District at the forefront of a national movement, joining a growing list of jurisdictions that are devoting increased public resources to advance civil justice.

The District of Columbia Access to Justice Commission requests that the District sustain this important investment in equal justice through the continued funding of the Access to Justice Initiative in fiscal year 2020, with an overall increase from fiscal year 2019 levels to allow program grants to keep pace with the growing demand for civil legal services from District residents. Our request is detailed further in the attached summary.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to the Commission's Executive Director, Nancy Drane, at nancy.drane@dcaccesstojustice.org or 202-736-8334.

Sincerely,

Peter B. Edelman, Chair

cc: Nancy E. Drane, Executive Director, D.C. Access to Justice Commission
Michelle M. Garcia, Director, D.C. Office of Victim Services and Justice Grants
Kirra L. Jarratt, Executive Director, DC Bar Foundation

D.C. Access to Justice Commission
FY 2020 Public Funding Request for Access to Justice Initiative:
Civil Legal Services and Poverty Lawyers

Summary:

Civil legal services are a critical strand in the safety net for District residents living in poverty. Most people would not attempt to navigate our complex court system without a lawyer, particularly when the things most precious to them – their children, their home, their physical safety, their only income stream – are on the line. Yet every day poor District residents are forced to face their legal troubles alone.

The District government has long recognized this critical need and for twelve years has provided vital financial support for fair access to civil legal services. The Access to Justice Initiative appropriation is used to increase services in communities and neighborhoods of highly concentrated poverty, expand representation in housing matters, and maintain a legal interpreter bank (part of the Access to Justice Grants Program). These funds also enable talented lawyers to remain working in District legal services organizations through loan repayment assistance (the District of Columbia Poverty Lawyer Loan Repayment Assistance Program or DC LRAP). In fiscal year 2018, the District government created a new program (the Civil Legal Counsel Projects Program) which targets the provision of legal services in eviction proceedings. The District has designated the DC Bar Foundation to administer these programs since their inception.

The D.C. Access to Justice Commission¹ requests that the District continue its commitment to equal justice through the continued funding of the Access to Justice Initiative in fiscal year 2020, with an overall increase of \$1,000,000 from fiscal year 2019 levels to improve the delivery of vital legal services.

Funding Request:

The District supports local civil legal services organizations through the Access to Justice Initiative, comprised of the Access to Justice Grants Program, the Civil Legal Counsel Projects Program, and the District of Columbia Poverty Lawyers Loan Repayment Assistance Program (DC LRAP). Taken together, these complementary programs represent an integrated and cohesive investment in access to justice.

We respectfully request the following:

Access to Justice Initiative - \$11,057,000 in recurring funds

- \$6,257,000 for the Access to Justice Grants Program. This is an increase of \$1,082,000 from our FY19 request. This increase will allow program grants to keep pace with the growing demand for civil legal aid and to support innovative practices in the delivery of legal services.
- \$4,500,000 for the Civil Legal Counsel Projects Program. This is level funding.
- \$300,000 for the DC Poverty Lawyers Loan Repayment Assistance Program. This decrease of \$82,000 from FY19 funding reflects the current need for loan repayment assistance for District poverty lawyers.

Background:

Since its inception, the District government appropriation has been vital to ensuring that tens of thousands of low-income District residents have access to legal assistance. These funds have fundamentally transformed the legal services network by significantly increasing the capacity and reach of District legal services organizations and permitting innovations that address emerging needs. The funds support more than 65 lawyers who represent individuals and families in the most underserved parts of our city. The funds have doubled the number of attorneys working east of the Anacostia River, easing the transportation burden for indigent residents and helping those organizations to become known and trusted parts of the safety net in those communities. *A list of FY19 grantees is attached.*

For fiscal year 2020, we are seeking an overall increase of \$1,000,000 from fiscal year 2019 levels to ensure that the program's resources keep pace with the District's growing need for civil legal services. The Access to Justice Initiative funds have consistently supported important work that serves as the core of the District's civil legal services network. The funds have remained relatively stable over the last several fiscal years, however. This leaves little room to accommodate the expansion of successful, existing programs and the development of new, innovative efforts that provide vital services to District residents. With increased funding, innovative programs in critical areas such as preserving affordable housing, and protecting seniors, immigrants, as well as low-wage workers will receive much-needed support.

Successes of the District's Access to Justice Initiative:

Every District resident should have access to the legal assistance necessary to improve their lives, protect their families, and strengthen their communities. Access to Justice Initiative funds have created fairness within the civil justice system, particularly programs tailored to populations that have traditionally struggled to access services. Examples of how these funds keep District families in their homes and protect vulnerable District residents like the elderly and children are described below.

Keeping District Families in Their Homes.

- **Preserving Affordable Housing.** These funds help to preserve affordable housing by preventing problems that may cause affordable housing cooperatives to convert to market rate housing. Attorneys assist tenant groups with preserving their tenant-owned limited equity cooperatives. These attorneys assist the tenants with developing and maintaining their administrative structure and governance, advise on regulatory compliance, and provide ongoing legal advice to the limited equity cooperatives board of directors.
- **Preventing Foreclosures.** These funds support attorneys who provide representation to low-income District residents in foreclosure cases. These attorneys are present in court every week for the foreclosure calendar to provide legal information and assistance to low-income individuals and families facing judicial foreclosure.
- **Avoiding Wrongful Eviction.** These funds support attorneys in D.C. Superior Court and the Landlord-Tenant Resource Center, the main entry points for tenants, to provide free same-day representation in eviction cases. Additional details on the launch of the Civil Legal Counsel Projects Program, which focuses exclusively on eviction, are below.

Supporting the Most Vulnerable in the District.

- **Keeping Children Healthy and In School.** These funds support Nationally-recognized projects like one medical-legal partnership which places attorneys alongside staff at some of the District's most high-volume providers of primary medical care. This project seeks to identify housing conditions contributing to childhood asthma, and by working with insurance companies, has identified both a positive health outcome for the affected children and reduced medical costs relating to emergency services. This project also is able to work hand in hand with doctors to improve the health of its clients and prevent missed days at school.
- **Assisting Homebound Seniors.** These funds support attorneys who visit the homes of DC's homebound low-income seniors to draft wills and advance directives. These attorneys also review public benefits and assist these seniors with scams and any housing-related issues.
- **Modeling Language Access.** The District's shared legal interpreter bank remains *the only one of its kind in the nation*. The legal interpreter bank provides assistance to attorneys and their low-income clients by using trained community legal interpreters. The bank provides language access services to nearly 40 District nonprofits that provide legal assistance to low-income residents, which is particularly valuable during a time of constant change in immigration policy. The bank now has over 120 specially trained interpreters available to provide services in 26 different languages (including American Sign Language and Certified Deaf Interpreters), and in 2018 provided 2,513 telephonic interpretations, 301 in-person interpretations, and 274 document translations.

Protecting District Residents in the Marketplace.

- **Stabilizing Credit for Low-Income Residents.** These funds promote efforts to support low-income District residents who have been targeted by debt collection schemes, providing same-day representation in small claims court on the commercial debt calendar. These attorneys have saved their low-income clients an average of \$1,046 each. These District residents are able to avoid the effects of a negative court judgment and a poor credit report, such as impossible payment plans, and inability to obtain employment and housing.
- **Shielding Immigrants from Fraud.** These funds support attorneys who advise, counsel, and represent immigrant victims of fraud in potential immigration, civil, and criminal processes stemming from fraudulent acts by so-called 'representatives' (often known as 'notarios' or 'immigration consultants') purporting to serve the immigrant community.

Civil Legal Counsel Projects Program.

The Commission is particularly pleased with the development of the Civil Legal Counsel Projects Program, launched in fiscal year 2018. In accordance with the legislation establishing the program, the funds support legal services providers that provide free eviction defense legal services to low-income tenants in the District. The increased presence of free legal services at the courthouse is making a tangible difference each day to address inequities in representation in eviction proceedings.

Six organizations received funding to address specific high-risk housing matters plaguing residents in the District dealing with wrongful evictions. Several grantees are coordinating efforts to combat the gap in legal representation for tenants facing eviction in the Landlord and Tenant Branch of D.C. Superior Court and identifying tenants who are at high risk of evictions due to voucher termination proceedings. This approach will allow for a coordinated model to be established in order for tenants who are the most in need for legal services not to be overlooked. In 2018, grantees served thousands

of low-income District residents through direct legal assistance, clinics, trainings, legal information, and pro bono services. *A list of grantees is attached.*

DC Poverty Lawyer Loan Repayment Assistance Program.

The DC Poverty Lawyer Loan Repayment Assistance Program (DC LRAP), a critical tool for recruiting and maintaining a talented and diverse corps of legal services lawyers, is also supported through these funds. The District's LRAP continues to be one of the most generous publicly-funded LRAPs in the country. It provides more than 40 attorneys living in the District with the opportunity to pay their monthly student loan debt while providing high-quality legal assistance to their neighbors.

Conclusion:

These numbers and project descriptions focus attention on how the funds change the lives of individual District residents, many of whom have fair access to justice only because of these appropriations. It is also important to note the significant effect the funds have on the broader administration of justice, the well-being of the community, and wise use of public funds. By keeping families economically stable, legal services attorneys reduce reliance on costlier public benefits systems. By keeping clients housed, they ease the burden on our homeless services network. By moving clients from local to federally-funded public benefits programs, they reduce the burden of these programs on the local budget. And through their work, they help enforce and strengthen District law that has been established to protect its residents.

The District's support of these programs has helped countless residents secure the legal assistance they need to maintain vital human needs, like housing, family stability, and employment - and in doing so, helps make the District a more just, stable community.

ⁱ The D.C. Access to Justice Commission was created by the D.C. Court of Appeals in 2005 to address low- and moderate-income residents' unmet need for civil legal services. The Commissioners include D.C. Court of Appeals and Superior Court judges, past Presidents of the D.C. Bar, Executive Directors of leading legal services providers, and other community leaders. For additional information, please contact the Commission's Executive Director, Nancy Drane, at (202) 736-8334 or nancy.drane@dcaccesstojustice.org. Please note that this request is being submitted on behalf of the non-judicial members of the Commission.

**DC Bar Foundation
2019 Access to Justice Initiative Grantees**

CIVIL LEGAL COUNSEL PROJECTS PROGRAM GRANTEEES – \$3,845,000

• **Creating Partnerships & Leveraging Resources to Prevent Eviction - \$398,435**

Neighborhood Legal Services Program (NLSP) received funding to greatly increase their capacity to accept referrals from the court-based eviction defense projects, as well as to conduct intake near the sites of properties that have building-wide evictions. NLSP has extensive community-based experience in providing housing-related legal assistance to low-income DC residents, which will enhance the impact of court-based eviction defense projects.

• **Eviction Defense Practice - \$343,345**

The DC Bar Pro Bono Center received funding to hire full-time attorneys for its Landlord-Tenant Resource Center, which serves as one of the main entry points for many low-income DC residents facing eviction. The DC Bar Pro Bono Center has assisted DC residents in eviction defense cases at the Landlord-Tenant Court since 2008 through its Landlord-Tenant Resource Center, supplemented by rotating volunteer attorneys.

• **Eviction Prevention Initiative - \$1,023,310**

DC Law Students in Court (DCLSIC) received funding to place several housing attorneys in DC Superior Court to provide low-income tenants with free-same day representation in eviction cases. These attorneys will also formally collaborate with Neighborhood Legal Services Program on a referral-basis, as well as other court-based providers. DCLSIC will continue to leverage their impact by utilizing law students to conduct outreach to low-income DC residents facing evictions and to assist with eviction cases.

• **Housing Preservation Project - \$675,000**

Bread for the City received funding for its attorneys based at DC Superior Court's Landlord-Tenant Court. The attorneys provide same-day representation to low-income DC residents facing eviction and conduct outreach to tenants living in subsidized housing and facing eviction. The project is also part of the court-based eviction defense collaboration with Legal Counsel for the Elderly, Legal Aid Society of the District of Columbia, DC Law Students in Court, and DC Bar Pro Bono Center.

• **Housing Preservation Project - \$929,910**

The Legal Aid Society of the District of Columbia received funding to provide Attorneys of the Day at the courthouse for eviction defense, as part of the court-based eviction defense collaboration with Legal Counsel for the Elderly, Bread for the City, DC Law Students in Court, and DC Bar Pro Bono Center. Attorneys will focus on tenants living in subsidized housing and facing eviction in order to preserve the few subsidies that remain in DC.

- **Housing Preservation Project - \$475,000**

Legal Counsel for the Elderly (LCE) received funding to assist low-income elderly residents (60+) in eviction defense cases at the Landlord-Tenant Court. The project's attorneys are based at the courthouse and will work in collaboration with the other court-based eviction defense projects. LCE will also conduct pre-court outreach to tenants living in subsidized housing and facing eviction.

ACCESS TO JUSTICE GRANTEES - \$4,626,000

Civil Issues in Criminal Matters – \$80,000

- **Expungement Clinic - \$80,000**

Through the Expungement Clinic, DC Law Students in Court provides legal assistance to low-income District residents who have a criminal arrest, charge, or conviction that they wish to seal. Even if they were never charged for or convicted of a crime, individuals may have a criminal record, making it more difficult to secure a job or housing, pursue education, and receive public assistance. The Expungement Clinic's attorneys work closely with eligible low-income District residents to seal their record and increase their chance at securing the basic components of a prosperous life.

Consumer Law – \$140,000

- **Consumer Law Court-Based Legal Services Project - \$70,000**

Legal Aid Society of the District of Columbia provides access to same-day representation in debt collection cases in an effort to protect the limited income and assets of low-income DC residents. The project places legal aid attorneys at DC Superior Court to serve low-income pro se litigants in debt collection matters before the Small Claims Court and the civil collections calendar.

- **Direct Legal Services in Debt Cases - \$70,000**

Tzedek DC assists low-income DC residents in debt-related legal matters. Tzedek DC helps residents avoid the effects of a negative court judgment and bad credit report, such as losing their driver's license, seizure of their bank account, impossible payment plans, and the inability to obtain employment. Tzedek DC also conducts community outreach by partnering with the United Planning Organization in Ward 7, where approximately 9,380 households are headed by a single female.

Domestic Violence/Victims' Rights – \$440,000

- **Domestic Violence Community Legal Services Project - \$140,000**

Bread for the City's Domestic Violence Community Legal Services Project provides legal aid, including civil protection orders, divorce, child custody, and public benefits, to low-income District residents who are experiencing violence.

- **Domestic Violence Underserved Communities Holistic Representation Project - \$125,000**

Legal Aid Society of the District of Columbia provides focused outreach and legal aid to domestic violence survivors in poor and underserved communities in DC. The project attorneys have also established an office at the Domestic Violence Intake Center located in DC Superior Court.

- **Empowerment Project - \$65,000**

The Amara Legal Center provides free legal aid to individuals whose rights have been violated by involvement in commercial sex, regardless of reason for entry into commercial sex. The project's attorney provides legal assistance in the areas of child custody and support, civil protection orders, public benefits, crime victims' compensation, and record sealing.

- **Representation for Domestic Violence Victims - \$70,000**

DC Volunteer Lawyers Project (DCVLP) represents domestic violence survivors in civil protection orders, custody, child support, and divorce matters. DCVLP utilizes a network of volunteer attorneys to address the severe shortage of free legal assistance for low-income people in the District who have urgent family law needs.

- **No Wrong Door to Justice - \$40,000**

The Network for Victim Recovery of DC focuses on empowering victims to achieve survivor defined justice, by addressing their holistic needs (including social, medical and mental health services) through a collaborative approaching encompassing advocacy, case management and legal services. Funding will support the Victim Legal Network of DC's expansion to reach more clients by adding a new bilingual attorney to serve as an entry point for crime victims seeking legal assistance.

Education – \$175,000

- **Direct Representation & Systemic Advocacy - \$75,000**

The School Justice Project (SJP) protects and advocates for the special education rights of court-involved students, ages 17 to 22, during incarceration and throughout reintegration. SJP attorneys work to increase access to appropriate special education in order to improve educational, employment, and life outcomes for this traditionally excluded student population.

- **School Discipline/Office of Administrative Hearings Extended Project - \$100,000**

Advocates for Justice and Education addresses the increasing demand for legal representation and support in suspension and expulsion proceedings. The project provides on-site free legal assistance (information, advice and counsel, and/or brief services) to parents, guardians, or students at student disciplinary hearings before the Office of Administrative Hearings.

Employment – \$200,000

- **Employment Justice Project - \$165,000**

The Washington Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights and Urban Affairs, through its Employment Justice Project, assists DC low-income workers recover stolen wages, fight discrimination, and ensure they receive their lawful wages by hosting clinics, conducting outreach, providing rights training, and representing clients.

- **Latina Outreach Project - \$35,000**

First Shift Justice Project (FSJP) runs the Latina Outreach Project to prevent unlawful job loss among low-income pregnant Latina women and new Latina mothers. FSJP works with Latina women and aims to prevent job loss. FSJP proactively reaches out to pregnant women to request pregnancy accommodations at work before they lose their jobs.

Family Law – \$290,000

- **Child Support Community Legal Services Project - \$250,000**

The Child Support Community Legal Services Project, run by Bread for the City (\$95,000) and Legal Aid Society of the District of Columbia (\$155,000), maintains a court-based legal services office at the Paternity & Support Branch of the DC Superior Court. The attorneys improve individual outcomes for custodial and noncustodial parents in their child support cases, enhance the fairness of the court process, and increase the efficiency of the Paternity & Support Branch.

- **Child Advocacy Project - \$40,000**

The DC Volunteers Lawyers Project (DCVLP) is one of only two organizations in the district that provide a voice for children at the center of a custody debate. DCVLP works to decrease the number of underrepresented at-risk children by serving as court-appointed Guardians ad litem.

General Services – \$819,000

- **Brief Services Unit - \$90,000**

At Neighborhood Legal Services Program's Brief Services Unit, attorneys perform an initial diagnosis of legal problems and provide advice or brief service, when such limited assistance may be sufficient, to enable the individual to resolve the problem. The beneficiaries of the project are low-income DC residents living in Wards 5, 7, and 8.

- **Polk Street NE Office - \$344,000**

Neighborhood Legal Services Program's (NLSP) office located in the Northeast neighborhood of Deanwood provides neighborhood-based legal aid in the areas of housing, family law, and public benefits. Staff attorneys are physically located at NLSP's office on Polk Street NE to provide low-income residents of this underserved community with free and accessible legal assistance.

- **Southeast Neighborhood Access and Underserved Needs Project - \$385,000**

At Legal Aid Society of the District of Columbia's office in Anacostia, attorneys assist Ward 7 and 8 residents with a range of civil legal issues, such as domestic violence and family law, public benefits, housing, and consumer law.

General Services to a Specific Population – \$360,000

- **DC Jail and Prison Advocacy Project - \$150,000**

Disability Rights DC at University Legal Services (ULS) serves as DC's federally mandated protection and advocacy organization charged with working for the rights of people with disabilities. ULS attorneys provide legal aid and direct advocacy for inmates with disabilities in the DC Jail and other DC correctional facilities. Their attorneys work closely with the DC Department of Corrections, the DC Department of Mental Health, and the Federal Bureau of Prisons on behalf of DC prisoners.

- **Homeless Legal Connect - \$30,000**

Christian Legal Aid of the District of Columbia staffs and manages its monthly intake center based at Central Union Mission, a men's homeless shelter and social service agency located in Ward 6. Staff attorneys and volunteer attorneys staff the clinic, providing legal assistance in various matters such as housing, public benefits, expungements, estate planning, and family law. About 50 percent of the clinic's clients are homeless, while the remainder are low-income residents of Wards 6, 7, and 8.

- **Project HELP (DC Homebound Elderly Project) - \$100,000**

Legal Counsel for the Elderly assists low-income, homebound elders in need of wills, advance directives, and public benefits audits, as well as those affected by consumer scams and housing-related issues. The Project HELP attorney also draws support from a pool of pro bono attorneys and other volunteer professionals to provide increased legal aid to homebound seniors.

- **Transgender Project - \$80,000**

Whitman-Walker Health assists DC's large transgender population on a variety of legal issues including discrimination in the workplace, at school, in housing, and in health care; public benefits; immigration; private health insurance; and obtaining accurate identity documents. The project serves transgender clients seeking assistance at its name and gender change clinic.

Health & Disability – \$452,000

- **Healthy Together Medical-Legal Partnership in Northeast DC - \$55,000**

Children's Law Center runs a medical-legal partnership with Unity Healthcare's Minnesota Avenue clinic in Northeast DC. Attorneys work with the clinic's doctors to identify and address each young patient's legal needs, such as substandard housing conditions, unmet educational needs, and lack of access to health care for urgent medical episodes.

- **Healthy Together Medical Legal Partnership in Southeast DC & Generations Project - \$242,000**

Children's Law Center received continued funding for its medical-legal partnership with the Children's National Medical Center's Healthy Together Southeast and Generations programs that focuses on teen parents and their children. The project provides legal representation on a wide range of issues and health outcomes for children born to teen parents.

- **Max Robinson Center - \$155,000**

Whitman-Walker Health (WWH) provides legal representation, counseling, and outreach to people living with HIV/AIDS and other low-income residents in Wards 7 and 8 through lawyers based at its Max Robinson Center in Southeast DC. WWH offers its free legal aid to lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender individuals in DC, regardless of HIV status, and to health care patients at WWH regardless of sexual orientation, HIV status, or gender identity.

Housing – \$1,200,000

- **Community Lawyering Project - \$150,000**

Bread for the City received continued funding for its community lawyering work located at its site on Good Hope Road SE. The project's attorneys work directly with the community to help identify options to tackle issues affecting its residents and, when needed, provide substantial direct representation to the residents. The project focuses on preserving affordable housing and addressing housing conditions.

- **Foreclosure Prevention Project (Legal Aid Society of the District of Columbia) - \$60,000**

Legal Aid Society of the District of Columbia provides representation to low-income DC residents in foreclosure cases. Their attorneys are present in court every week for the call of the judicial foreclosure calendar to provide information and assistance to homeowners facing foreclosure.

- **Housing Preservation Project (DC Bar Pro Bono Center) - \$40,000**

The DC Bar Pro Bono Center received new funding to provide legal assistance in cases involving housing conditions and unlawful rent increases. The project's attorneys are based at the courthouse, and they also receive clients through their advice and referral clinic.

- **Healthy Together Housing Conditions - \$100,000**

Children's Law Center received new funding to base attorneys at their children's health clinic partners, focusing particularly on areas with high asthma rates and poverty rates in Northeast and Northwest DC. The project's attorneys will provide legal assistance to low-income DC families whose children's health problems – such as asthma – are caused by housing instability or harmful housing conditions. The project's goals are to improve children's health so they can attend school regularly and receive a meaningful

education, rather than spending time in the hospital for health issues related to housing conditions and instability.

- **Housing Advocacy for People with Mental Illness Project - \$65,000**

University Legal Services (ULS) received funding to address significant housing barriers faced by people with disabilities, especially people with mental illness, through systemic and individual advocacy for reasonable accommodations by housing and service providers. The project will advocate to promote the availability of accessible community residential facilities and access to needed Medicaid home and community-based services to secure and preserve housing for people with disabilities. This will be done in part by filing grievances with mental health providers and the D.C. Department of Behavioral Health and/or complaints with the Office of Human Rights to address housing conditions and rights violations. In addition, this project will advocate on the behalf of individuals with disabilities who are risk of institutionalization or eviction as a result of housing discrimination by public, subsidized or private housing providers.

- **Housing and Community Development Project - \$50,000**

The Asian Pacific American Legal Resource Center (APALRC) is the region's legal advocate for the legal and civil rights of Asian Americans in the Washington metropolitan area. Through the Housing and Community Development Project, APALRC received continued funding to provide legal assistance to the District's low-income Asian immigrants with limited-English proficiency regarding evictions, threats, illegal rent increase, and bad housing conditions, as well as illegal relocation, denial of access to housing applications, and lack of language access in Section 8 housing developments.

- **Housing Cooperative Preservation Initiative - \$70,000**

Through its Housing Cooperative Preservation Initiative Project, Neighborhood Legal Services Program preserves tenant-owned limited equity cooperatives (LECs). The project's attorneys assist tenant groups to develop and maintain their LEC's administrative infrastructure and governance, advise on regulatory compliance, and provide on-going legal advice to LEC board of directors. The project's goal is to prevent problems that may cause these affordable housing cooperatives to convert to market rate housing.

- **Housing Justice Advocacy Project - \$120,000**

The Legal Aid Society of the District of Columbia received new funding to represent tenants and tenant associations in building-wide cases, as part of a larger housing preservation network that includes Bread for the City, Washington Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights and Urban Affairs, and Washington Legal Clinic for the Homeless. This project will focus on cases involving the Tenant Opportunity to Purchase Act, redevelopment, subsidy expirations, rent control, and housing conditions.

- **Housing Justice Project - \$200,000**

Washington Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights and Urban Affairs (WLC) received continued funding to support its collaboration with Bread for the City, Legal Aid Society of the District of Columbia, and Washington Legal Clinic for the Homeless to provide the full range of coordinated legal services for the purposes of preserving and expanding decent housing choices across the city. As part of the partnership, WLC focuses on addressing housing discrimination based on race, source of income, familial status and history of criminal conviction.

- **Increasing Capacity of the Fair Housing Clinic - \$110,500**

Howard University School of Law received new funding to hire an attorney for its Fair Housing Clinic. With this increased capacity, the Clinic will represent more tenants in cases involving low income residents with discriminatory housing problems.

- **Stabilizing Communities Through Affordable Housing - \$234,500**

Neighborhood Legal Services Program (\$150,000) and DC Law Students in Court (\$84,500) received new funding to collaborate on preserving affordable housing by representing tenants and tenant organizations in housing conditions cases, zoning cases, misuse of barring notices, and many other issues that jeopardize the future of affordable housing in DC.

Immigration – \$120,000

- **Pro Bono Asylum Program - \$50,000**

Torture Abolition and Survivors Support Coalition's Pro Bono Asylum Program (PBAP) provides free legal aid to survivors of torture who reside in DC and are seeking political asylum. PBAP's attorneys help survivors prepare their applications, affidavits, and evidence for asylum, as well as represent them in their asylum interviews.

- **Project Eradicating Notario Deceit (END) - \$70,000**

Ayuda's Project END advises, counsels, and represents immigrant victims of fraud in potential immigration, civil, and criminal processes stemming from fraudulent acts by "representatives" purporting to serve the immigrant community. These representatives are often known as "notarios" or "immigration consultants." The intended beneficiaries of Project END are low-income immigrants residing in the District who have been defrauded by a notario.

Interpreter Bank – \$350,000

- **Community Legal Interpreter Bank - \$350,000**

Since 2007, Ayuda has run a shared legal interpreter bank which provides assistance to legal aid providers using trained community legal interpreters. The project serves as a national model for coordinated, point-of-service legal interpreter services.