

SHRIVER CENTER LEADING THE CHANGE

The Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law is a law and policy center that champions economic opportunity so that people can move out of poverty permanently. Our mission is not to manage poverty; our mission is to lead a national movement to end it. Our leadership and action are producing change.

Through policy development, communications, and impact litigation, we are leading a national network of advocates and attorneys who are taking action to end poverty. By crafting model advocacy and strategic plans, we are changing the lives of millions of low-income families. We are improving the lives of low-wage workers, we are advancing families toward economic security, we are creating communities of opportunity, and we are assuring the preservation of affordable housing.

We are leading the change.

40 YEARS
LEADING THE CHANGE



TAKING ACTION TO END POVERTY
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LEADING WITH MODEL POLICY AND ADVOCACY

ACCESS TO THE FINANCIAL MAINSTREAM

The Shriver Center helped establish a student-run bank branch and produced a related *Guide to Establishing Bank Branches in High Schools* and the *Branching Out* video for national dissemination. Following our lead, schools and teen centers across the country are planning similar projects. We initiated public-private partnerships, conducted pilot projects and evaluations, and published results and best practices to help low-income adults and children increase financial knowledge, use mainstream financial services, avoid money traps, and build savings.

ASSET BUILDING

The Shriver Center is part of the national SEED Initiative and cochair of a leading statewide group to advance policies that build and protect assets. Children's Savings Accounts bills have been introduced in Illinois, and we are working to reform public assistance asset limits, both at the state and federal levels.

CHILD CARE

The Shriver Center coauthored a report establishing the framework for reforms secured by the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 880 in negotiating a contract for 40,000 home-based child care providers. The Shriver Center also negotiated parity increases for child care centers participating in Illinois's Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP).

FATHERHOOD

The Shriver Center drafted portions of the federal Responsible Fatherhood and Healthy Families Act of 2006. The Act provides noncustodial fathers with job training services and other economic opportunities to help them support their families. We included provisions that would create the first-ever earmarked federal funding for transitional jobs.

HEALTH CARE

Building on its government budgetary expertise and its successes with state-based health care coverage, the Shriver Center is developing and promoting a federal health care program for all Americans. The Shriver Center proposal offers a three-phase rollout plan, beginning with a substantial planning grant to any state to devise a plan to cover everyone in the states. The plans must be consistent with the core principles of being available to everyone, being affordable at any income level, offering comprehensive coverage, and being sustainable. All other aspects and details are left to the states (delivery model, public-private mix, etc.). The proposal then invites states to submit plans consistent with these core principles for federal approval. Approved plans will receive substantial federal funding to support at least half of the costs of the expansion.

HOUSING PRESERVATION

The Shriver Center helped create the Rental Housing Alliance to prevent the loss of sorely needed federally subsidized housing. With private and public partners we have developed a model early warning system to maintain federally subsidized housing collaboratively for generations to come.

IMMIGRATION

In 2004 the Shriver Center averted a crisis in Illinois for elderly and disabled refugees and asylees in danger of losing their Supplemental Security Income benefits while waiting to become citizens. We led a coalition to pass a state law providing financial aid through Illinois's Aid to the Aged, Blind, and Disabled (AABD) program. Before the program could expire in 2006, we led a successful effort to extend it for another three years.

REENTRY

Working with advocates around the country, the Shriver Center continued in 2006 to examine the barriers facing people with criminal conviction records. We are developing local, state, and national policies to eliminate those barriers, especially in employment and housing, where they do not serve a true public safety purpose.

SAFE HOMES

The Shriver Center helped in passing the Safe Homes Act, in effect in Illinois as of January 1, 2007, to ensure that victims of domestic and sexual violence can secure safe housing. With the Safe Homes Initiative, we are advocating the adoption of model policies building on the Safe Homes Act and new provisions in the Violence Against Women Act of 2003 to provide safe and affordable housing to all violence victims living in public and private rental housing.

STEMMING THE DROPOUT CRISIS

The Shriver Center developed the Ensuring Success in School Act (ESSA), a model policy which promotes successful school completion among youths who are parents, expectant parents, or victims of domestic or sexual violence. As of April 2007, H.B.1330 successfully passed through the Illinois House of Representatives with bipartisan support. The Shriver Center is also spearheading a national coalition to advance similar federal legislation.

WELFARE AND WORK SUPPORTS

The Shriver Center is working to minimize the negative effects of new federal regulations that severely curtail state flexibility in the administration of the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program. We aim to ensure that Illinois's implementation of these regulations does not limit TANF recipients' ability to receive the education and training they need to make the transition from welfare to work.

LEADING THROUGH IMPACT LITIGATION

WITH GENEROUS SUPPORT FROM PRO BONO COUNSEL

ACORN V. HUD

The Shriver Center filed a federal class action lawsuit against the U.S. Housing and Urban Development (HUD) on behalf of Chicago ACORN and 1,000 residents of a project-based Section 8 housing project called Lawndale Restoration. In January 2006 the plaintiffs withdrew their lawsuit after HUD committed to maintain nearly a third of the property as project-based Section 8, and the remaining units as affordable.

BELL V. LEAVITT

The Shriver Center led a nationwide class action lawsuit challenging the new requirement that Medicaid eligibility be based upon specialized citizenship documentation. Since we filed the case in June 2006, over 8,000,000 people with disabilities and the elderly have been exempted, and the health care of some 500,000 foster care and adopted children will be protected.

ELIZABETH BURNETTE V. HOUSING AUTHORITY OF ELGIN

The Shriver Center restored housing subsidies for up to 40 low-income families in Elgin, Illinois. The families lost their vouchers in 2005 due to alleged money troubles of Elgin's housing authority. This action put the Shriver Center at the forefront of a national campaign to protect the rights of families falling victim to federal funding cuts.

HENRY HORNER MOTHERS GUILD V. CHA AND HUD

The Shriver Center led the redevelopment of the Governor Henry Horner public housing on Chicago's Near West Side. The redevelopment began in 1995 as a result of a class action lawsuit filed in 1991. By 2006 most of the Horner families were living in their new replacement housing, including a luxury condominium midrise building, West Haven Park Tower.

KAPLAN V. CHERTOFF

The Shriver Center is cocounsel in the nation's only class action lawsuit seeking to restore Supplemental Social Security Income disability benefits for elderly and disabled immigrants who fled persecution and were granted asylum in the United States. In March 2007 the U.S. District Court in Philadelphia denied the government's motion to dismiss, thereby removing a major legal hurdle for the plaintiffs.

MCLEAN HOUSING AUTHORITY V. HUD

The Shriver Center advocated that HUD fully fund all 220 vouchers administered by the McLean Housing Authority. After an aggressive campaign with our congressional delegation and other advocates, HUD agreed to return \$299,000 in unspent funds to the housing authority to cover each family's Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher.

MEMISOVSKI V. MARAM

The Shriver Center won a class action that produced substantial rate increases for pediatricians and dentists who provide primary care services to 600,000 children in Cook County. The suit also granted bonuses for doctors offering well-child services, established program improvements to recruit doctors, and led to a complete overhaul of the program's informational materials.

WALLACE V. CHA

The Shriver Center represented plaintiffs displaced by public housing demolition; plaintiffs alleged that the Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) violated federal fair housing laws by failing to provide them with adequate relocation services. In May 2005 the lawsuit was settled after the CHA agreed to implement new relocation programs that encouraged moves to areas of economic opportunity and racial integration.

RUTH WILLIAMS AND JANE ADDAMS SENIOR CAUCUS V. MOODY BIBLE INSTITUTE

Representing the residents of 171 W. Oak and the Jane Addams Senior Caucus, the Shriver Center filed this lawsuit in September 2006 to preserve a federally subsidized property. The property's owners illegally converted the housing into student dormitories and discriminated against the elderly and disabled residents. The parties are working to settle the case to preserve all 201 units.

LEADING A NATIONAL NETWORK OF ADVOCATES

CLEARINGHOUSE REVIEW

CLEARINGHOUSE REVIEW: JOURNAL OF POVERTY LAW AND POLICY is the nation's intellectual marketplace for sharing ideas and planting seeds for legal and policy innovation. The Shriver Center published two special issues of the REVIEW in 2006: *What the Federal Government Must Do to End Poverty* and *A Right to a Lawyer? Momentum Grows*. Both were very well received. In 2007 a special issue will focus on representing clients involved with the criminal justice system and another special issue on helping persons with disabilities.

THE STATE OF POVERTY

The Shriver Center launched The State of Poverty Campaign to make the eradication of poverty a national priority. Using advocacy, media awareness, and public education, the campaign has these objectives:

- Advance achievable policies to confront poverty in the United States
- Affect criteria used to judge federal policies and policymakers
- Engage and mobilize constituents into antipoverty action

As part of the campaign, the Shriver Center released *The State of Poverty: 2006 Congressional Midterm Report* so that advocates across the United States can evaluate how each member of Congress represents low-income Americans. A new report will be released in late 2007.

WWW.POVERTYLAW.ORG

The Shriver Center's website is an essential portal for antipoverty advocates. The site offers current, comprehensive information and analyses about poverty law and policy developments, information about the Shriver Center's many activities, and the online version of CLEARINGHOUSE REVIEW.

EJUSTICE

eJustice (www.ejustice.org) provides technology leadership, training, and information services to legal advocates for low-income people. eJustice supports technology projects in the nonprofit legal aid community through on-demand online training sessions, timely articles, and technology tools. *Federal Practice Manual for Legal Aid Attorneys* a Shriver Center book in HTML format with links is available at www.ejustice.org.

FEMA ANSWERS

In 2005 the Shriver Center and the Public Interest Law Project developed www.femaanswers.org, a website dedicated to helping survivors of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita obtain adequate assistance from the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

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*"Let those who have experienced life when
vision was real and tangible in America
... unite today to bring it back."*

—R. Sargent Shriver



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