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## **LSC Releases Report on Justice Gap in America**

*Report finds that at least 80 percent of the civil legal needs of low-income Americans are not being met.*

**WASHINGTON, DC** -- The Legal Services Corporation (LSC) today released "Documenting the Justice Gap in America: The Current Unmet Civil Legal Needs of Low-Income Americans," a report that concludes that at least 80 percent of the civil legal needs of low-income Americans are not being met.

The report was a culmination of a year-long study by LSC to document the extent to which current civil legal needs of low-income Americans are not being met, taking into account all the changes in the civil justice system in the last decade, including both LSC-funded services and non-federal resources.

"There is a serious justice gap in America. Stagnant federal funding and an increased poverty population have served to increase the unmet demand. The LSC 'Unable to Serve' study, the first comprehensive national statistical study ever undertaken, established that for every client who receives service, one applicant was turned away, indicating that 50 percent of the potential clients requesting assistance from an LSC grantee were turned away for lack of resources on the part of the program," said LSC President Helaine M. Barnett.

Barnett added, "The analysis for the report was concluded in August 2005. Consequently, none of the data in the report reflects the increased need for legal assistance that will result from the impact of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita by a greatly expanded client-eligible population, not only in the states where the hurricanes struck, but across the nation where evacuees have been relocated. A disaster of this magnitude highlights the critical need for civil legal assistance."

The report is available for download from LSC's website.

Established by an Act of Congress in 1974, the mission of the Legal Services Corporation is to provide equal access to the system of justice and improve opportunities for low income people throughout the United States by making grants for the provision of high-quality civil legal assistance to those who would be otherwise unable to afford legal counsel. LSC currently funds 140 independent local legal aid programs around the nation. Its 11-member Board of Directors is appointed by the President of the United States with the advice and consent of the U.S. Senate. For more information, please visit [www.lsc.gov](http://www.lsc.gov).