

# The New York Times

ON THE WEB

EDITORIAL DESK

## Hobbling Nonprofits

(NYT) 211 words

Published: December 7, 2005

To the Editor:

Re "Separate and Inequitable" (editorial, Dec. 6):

The "separate facilities" rule applied to legal services organizations isn't a matter of concern only for the courts.

Congress, too, can fix this dangerous rule, which forces cash-strapped nonprofits to waste charitable donations on separate offices instead of on assisting the needy.

By acting, Congress will ensure that many more vulnerable, low-income people have access to civil legal counsel.

Last week, the National Council of Churches and 30 other faith-based organizations called on Congress to do just that, both because the separate-facilities rule hurts low-income families and because it threatens public-private partnerships.

It's time for Congress to stand up for those who without a helping hand from legal services organizations and the shared blessings of others have no place else to turn for legal help.

(Rev.) Eileen W. Lindner

Deputy General Secretary for Research and Planning National Council of Churches  
U.S.A.

New York, Dec. 6, 2005