

## COMMEMORATING THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE LEGAL SERVICES CORPORATION

HON. ROBERT C. "BOBBY" SCOTT OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, July 23, 2014*

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, Friday, July 25th, marks the 40th anniversary of the Legal Services Corporation, which was established by Congress in 1974, with bipartisan support, including that of President Richard Nixon. LSC is a private, nonprofit corporation, funded by Congress. Its mission is to ensure equal access to justice under the law for all Americans by providing civil legal assistance to those who otherwise would be unable to afford it. LSC funds 134 local legal aid programs, with nearly 800 offices serving every state and U.S. territory.

I have long been a supporter of legal assistance for low income Americans and of the LSC dating back to the 1970s, when I led the effort to establish the LSC funded Virginia Peninsula Legal Aid Center, Inc. So I know from first-hand experience that LSC-funded legal aid programs make a critical difference to low income Americans by assisting with their most basic civil legal needs.

Many Americans are helped by this organization. Three out of four legal aid clients are women, and legal aid programs often identify domestic violence as one of their top priorities. LSC funded attorneys help women seeking protection from abuse, mothers trying to obtain child support, families facing unlawful evictions or foreclosures that could leave them homeless, veterans seeking duly earned benefits, seniors impacted by consumer scams, individuals who have lost their jobs and need help in applying for unemployment compensation and other benefits, and parents seeking to obtain and keep custody of their children.

Today, 63.5 million Americans are eligible for LSC services, which is the highest number in LSC history. Unfortunately, LSC grantees are forced to turn away more than 50 percent of eligible clients who seek their assistance because of lack of adequate funding. With the growing number of Americans eligible for services and increased demand for legal services, the need for legal aid attorneys has never been greater.

Mr. Speaker, on this 40th anniversary, I salute the Legal Services Corporation and LSC-funded attorneys for the vital work they do every day on behalf of millions of Americans who need qualified, competent legal counsel. Every day that a legal aid attorney protects the safety, security, health, and economic well being of our most vulnerable citizens, they bring this nation closer to living up to its commitment to equal justice for all.