



PRESS RELEASE
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WESTCHESTER COUNTY BOARD OF LEGISLATORS FUNDS OPENING OF NEW LEGAL SERVICES OFFICE IN MT. VERNON

(White Plains, New York) On December 12, 2005, the Westchester County Board of Legislators added \$500,000 to its 2006 budget to fund an office in Mount Vernon, New York, for Legal Services of the Hudson Valley (LSHV) in the Spring of 2006. The Westchester County Executive and Board of Legislators strongly support funding civil legal services for the poor, and decided to add this funding to assist residents in one of the County=s neediest and most under served cities. With the funding, Legal Services of the Hudson Valley will open a law office to serve the critical civil legal needs of poor and low-income people. Residents will receive free civil (non-criminal) legal help in all matters, including housing, family law, benefits, education and consumer issues. In addition to this assistance, My Sister=s Place will provide specialized legal services to women who are victims of domestic violence, and Westchester Hispanic Coalition will deal with the many issues facing immigrants in Westchester. In thanking the County Board of Legislators, LSHV Executive Director Barbara Finkelstein promised to open a full service legal office that would serve the critical legal needs of poor and low-income people in Mount Vernon. During the course of the debate that preceded the Board's budget vote, Bill Ryan, Chair of the County Board, spoke out strongly in favor of funding the Mt. Vernon office. "It's an important responsibility of government to help those who need legal representation but can't afford to hire a lawyer privately," said Ryan. AThe demand is there for these services B we are supplying the tools for people to level the legal playing field. We are helping to improve their lives,@ said County Legislator Clinton Young of Mount Vernon. This will be the seventh office that LSHV will establish in the seven county region it serves.

Legal Services of the Hudson Valley (formerly Westchester/Putnam Legal Services) is a non-profit organization that has been providing high quality free legal representation to poor and low-income individuals and families in civil legal matters for over thirty-eight years. The services offered help struggling individuals to resolve urgent, non-criminal legal problems that can lead to larger social problems such as homelessness. Since LSHV=s inception in 1967, more than 100,000 clients have been served. LSHV provides services in Westchester, Dutchess, Orange, Putnam, Rockland, Sullivan and Ulster Counties in New York. They have offices in White Plains (headquarters office), Yonkers, Poughkeepsie, Newburgh, Mahopac and Kingston, New York.