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Subject: Justice in Aging is Access to the Courts

In case you missed it, NSCLC is launching a new name and tagline. On March 2 2015, we'll become Justice in Aging. The tagline, "fighting senior poverty through law," harkens back to our beginnings in 1972 when we were founded as a back-up legal center through the Office of Economic Opportunity to create social change for the elderly poor.

For 43 years we've done that through administrative advocacy and when necessary, through litigation. In case after case, we've worked to bring justice to people with limited or no access to legal help.

People like Marion Dyke, Jr., a class member in the *Clark v. Astrue* case, a nationwide class action lawsuit that challenged the Social Security Administration's illegal policy of denying or stopping benefits based solely on the existence of a warrant for an alleged violation of probation. One night in 2009, as he was driving through Baldwin County, Georgia during a visit to the area, Marion was stopped for a traffic violation. In 2010, back home in Indiana, Marion was notified that his Social Security benefits would stop because of an outstanding probation warrant, which he knew nothing about. While trying to find out why he lost his benefits, he and his wife became homeless.

He eventually made it back to Georgia to try to clear up the mess. A Georgia Legal Services attorney advised him that he was likely part of the *Clark v. Astrue* class. As it turned out, he was. Marion's benefits were reinstated and he received \$59,860 in back benefits shortly after. He was one of 100,000 people who benefited from the Clark case. He did not have to go to jail and both he and his wife were no longer homeless. That's justice in aging.

Marion's story provides an example of what can happen to millions of low-income seniors who rely on our social safety net for almost all of their income. When your benefits stop

unexpectedly, the results can be homelessness, hunger, loss of necessary medical attention, even death. The edge on which the elderly poor live is so thin that recourse is crucial when things go wrong. Sometimes, that can only happen through legal action.

Our name is changing, but the high impact litigation we do to achieve justice for older adults won't change a bit.

In community,

Anna Rich, Litigation Director

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