



NEWS RELEASE

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**U.S. Commission on Civil Rights Announces Date for Briefing Related to its Report,
*Municipal Policing and Courts: A Search for Justice or a Quest for Revenue***

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights announced today that it will hold a public briefing on Friday, March 18th, 2016 to examine how municipalities may target individuals within the criminal justice system to raise revenue via the collection of fees and fines. Municipalities reliant on criminal justice revenue streams may interfere with the judiciary’s independent role, divert attention from the courts’ essential functions, and adversely impact the most vulnerable residents, principally those living in or near poverty.

In light of the 2015 Department of Justice patterns and practice investigation into policing and municipal court practices in Ferguson, MO the Commission’s report, “Municipal Policing and Courts: A Search for Justice or a Quest for Revenue” will examine the national implication of revenue generating tactics in similarly situated jurisdictions across the country. The briefing and report will address due process issues and the enforcement of other federal laws that violate Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Commission Chairman Martin R. Castro stated, “Revenue should never be the driving force behind the administration of justice, whether in the case of municipal fines, detention or incarceration. To allow this to occur denigrates our system of government, especially when it is aimed at communities that can least defend themselves.”

Vice-Chair Patricia Timmons-Goodson of the Commission stated, “As America’s civil rights watch dog, the Commission must investigate the pervasiveness of issues similar to those found in Ferguson and recommend an appropriate response.”

WHAT: Briefing on Municipal Policing and Courts: A Search for Justice or a Quest for Revenue.

WHEN: March 18, 2016, from 9:00a.m. to 3:30p.m. EST

Please arrive early as seating is limited or participate via teleconference.

WHERE: U.S. Commission on Civil Rights
1331 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Suite 1150
Washington, DC 20425 (Entrance on F Street NW)

LISTEN IN: To listen to the Commission's Briefing via telephone, please follow the instructions below:

Dial toll-free number 1-888-572-7033; Provide operator conference #6194124.

DOCUMENTS: **The Commission is going green!** Electronic versions of the briefing documents will be available online on 03/17/2016.

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Deaf or hearing-impaired persons who require the services of a sign language interpreter should contact Pam Dunston at (202) 376-8105.