



HEADQUARTERS ACTIVITY

April:

The Commission issued statements (1) [urging](#) the Department of Justice to use all available tools to work with police departments to ensure Constitutional policing, and (2) [taking issue](#) with immigrants' access to justice, based on the devastating impact of placing ICE agents at courthouses.

Speaker Series: Drs. Diane Afoumado and Rebecca Erbelding of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum presented on the fate of Jewish refugees during World War II on board the *MS St. Louis*, which the United States turned away, notwithstanding the dire plight of the refugees and the reality that many of them had pending paperwork seeking their admission to the U.S. You can view their captivating remarks on [C-SPAN](#).



May:

The Commission held a [briefing](#) on the collateral consequences facing formerly incarcerated persons. See written testimony by the panelists [here](#).



In Colorado, the Denver City Council voted to add a hate-crime element to Denver’s criminal sentencing laws; Denver City Attorney Kristin Bronson [stated](#) the action was “partly a response” to the Commission’s statement from March regarding hate crimes. In March, the Commission had [called](#) on state and federal officials “to respond immediately and effectively to end violence based on religion, national origin, race, or other identity status.”

June:

The Commission [expressed](#) grave concern over current federal civil rights enforcement efficacy and priorities. In addition, the Commission unanimously approved a comprehensive two-year assessment of federal civil rights enforcement efficacy, which will conclude in Fiscal Year 2019. The Commission also voted to take up the following issues in the coming years:

- An assessment of voting rights obstacles in the United States (fiscal year 2018 statutory enforcement report): the Commission will examine the U.S. Department of Justice’s voting rights enforcement efforts following the 2006 reauthorization of the Voting Rights Act, including the impact of the *Shelby County* decision, as well as the proliferation of restrictions on voter access.
- Responding to hate crimes at the federal, state, and local levels: The Commission will examine best practices for local law enforcement on collecting and reporting hate crimes data and the Education and Justice Departments’ role in prosecuting and preventing hate incidents.
- The school-to-prison pipeline: the intersection of students of color and children with disabilities: the Commission will examine the intersection of school

discipline policies for students who experience discrimination based on their race, their disability status, and their status as students of color with a disability.

- Women in prison: the Commission will review the conditions of confinement of incarcerated women in prison systems around the country.
- A view from the states: the Commission will conduct a survey of all 51 of its State Advisory Committees to determine which civil rights issues the Committee members consider most pressing and significant in their respective states.

Speaker series: Eliza Byard of GLSEN, Rea Carey of the National LGBTQ Task Force, and Mara Keisling of the Center for Transgender Equality presented on the history of LGBT rights in the United States. We invite you to view their remarks: <https://goo.gl/MNAc9Q>, <https://goo.gl/YcGtRa>.



STATE ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SAC) ACTIVITY

Our State Advisory Committees (SACs) continue to be active in investigating and reporting on civil rights issues in their states. We thank the members of all SACs for determining important topics for investigation, hosting briefings, and issuing – or planning to issue – reports on these important topics. Here are some highlights of recent activity.

May:

The Connecticut SAC issued an Advisory [Memorandum](#) recommending legislation on solitary confinement. In June, the Connecticut state legislature

unanimously passed responsive legislative reform. As of this writing, the bill is pending signature by the governor. We are grateful to SAC Chair David McGuire for presenting on the topic at the June Commission business meeting.

June:

The Maine SAC held a public [briefing](http://www.greatfallstv.net/webstream.htm) on criminalization of people with mental illnesses. Video can be viewed at <http://www.greatfallstv.net/webstream.htm> (Playlists -> Lewiston Government -> Rights Commission). Please also see local press coverage: [WCSH 6](#), [Maine Public](#), and the [Sun Journal](#).



The Ohio SAC issued a [report](#) on human trafficking in the state. Please see mention of the report by [Chandra Law](#) and [Giffen & Kaminski](#).

The Nevada SAC issued an Advisory [Memorandum](#) with findings and recommendations regarding civil rights aspects of fines and fees in the state. The Commission appreciates the timely opportunity to incorporate information from this Memorandum into the forthcoming Commission report on efficacy of U.S. Department of Justice enforcement activity regarding municipal fines and fees.

New SAC appointments:

- **[Alabama](#):** Jenny Carroll, Chair, Birmingham; Marc Ayers, Birmingham; Craig Hymowitz, Mountain Brook; Michael Innis-Jimenez, Tuscaloosa; Peter Jones, Birmingham; Angela Lewis, Homewood; Raphael Maharaj, Mobile; Isabel Rubio, Birmingham; Martha Lynn Shearer, Birmingham; Maurice Shevin, Birmingham;

Cameron Smith, Vestavia Hills; David Smolin, Homewood; Daiquiri Steele, Tuscaloosa; Tari Williams, Pleasant Grove.

- **Alaska:** Natalie Landreth, Chair, Anchorage; Robin Bronen, Anchorage; Nelson Godoy, Anchorage; Paula Haley, Anchorage; Cynthia Henry, Fairbanks; John Hoffman, Anchorage; Judith Kleinfeld, Fairbanks; Gerald McBeath, Fairbanks; Elizabeth Medicine Crow, Anchorage; Denise Morris, Anchorage; Marilyn Stewart, Anchorage; Margaret Stock, Anchorage; Venus Woods; Anchorage.
- **Arizona:** Lorena Van Assche, Chair, Scottsdale; Rebekah Browder, Gilbert; Patty Ferguson-Bohnee, Sacaton; Ann Hart, Phoenix; Melissa Ho, Phoenix; Dana Kennedy, Phoenix; David Kim, Gilbert; Adolfo Maldonado, Tempe; Aaron Martin, Phoenix; Evangeline Nunez, Phoenix; Theresa Rassas, Phoenix; Jonathan Rose, Tempe; Beverly Walker, Phoenix; Eric Yordy, Flagstaff.
- **Michigan:** Agustin Arbulu, Chair, Birmingham; Mindy Barry, Grosse Pointe Park; Jocelyn Benson, Detroit; Khaled Beydoun, Detroit; Kingsley Browne, Ann Arbor; Evan Caminker, Ann Arbor; Emily Dievendorf, Lansing; William Elliott III, Ann Arbor; Max Goss, Pleasant Ridge; Samuel Gregg, Ann Arbor; Jon Hoadley, Kalamazoo; Roland Hwang, Northville; Jamie Mitchell, Clarkston; Ronald Pestrutto, Jr., Moscow Township; Sarah Prescott, Northville; Paul Rahe, Hillsdale; Margo Schlanger, Ann Arbor.
- **Montana:** Gwendolyn Kircher, Chair, Billings; Kiah Abbey, Bozeman; John Baden, Gallitan Gateway; Doug Betters, Whitefish; Norma Bixby, Lame Deer; Joan Hoff, Big Sky; David Lopez, Billings; David Morales, Billings; Dale Rambur, Billings; Denise Rogers, Bozeman; Maylinn Smith, Arlee; Dennis Taylor, Helena.
- **New Hampshire:** JerriAnne Boggis, Chair, Milford; Katherine Brown, Barrington; Joshua Elliott-Traficante, Concord; Mahboubul Hassan, Manchester; Seth Hipple, Concord; Barbara Jago, Bedford; Rogers Johnson, Stratham; Maureen Raiche Manning, Manchester; Rafael Rojas, Jr., Hopkinton; Rubi Simon, Etna; Jason Sorens, Lyme; Alejandro Urrutia, Hudson; Jacquelyne Weatherspoon, Exeter.
- **Oklahoma:** Vicki Limas, Chair, Claremore; Mary Sue Backus, Norman; Wendell Bollinger, Del City; Maria del Guadalupe Davidson, Norman; Adam Doverspike, Tulsa; Moises Echeverria-Ashworth, Tulsa; Amir Khaliq, Oklahoma City; Andy Lester, Edmond; Charity Marcus, Bixby; Michael Owens, Newalla; Christopher Smith, Edmond; Amanda Snipes, Oklahoma City; Joseph Thai, Oklahoma City; Donya Williams, Bluejacket.

Congratulations to our new appointees, and our continued thanks for their service to civil rights, to their state communities, and to the Commission.

LOOKING AHEAD

On July 14, Commissioners meet for our monthly business [meeting](#).
Subsequent 2017 meeting dates include: August 18; September 8; October 20;
November 13; and December 8.

Our SACs have several public briefings scheduled:

On July 18, in Denver, CO: the [Blaine Amendment](#).

On July 24, in Nashville, TN: [civil asset forfeiture](#).

On August 24, in Anchorage, AK: voting rights.

DID YOU KNOW?

As we learned in the last newsletter, the newly-created U.S. Commission on Civil Rights traveled to Alabama in to investigate voter obstruction and discrimination in December 1958. But did you know that the Commission team, which included an African American commissioner and two African American lawyers, could not make hotel arrangements because of segregation laws? Instead, the group stayed at Maxwell Air Force Base. When President Eisenhower learned that the base commander said that “accommodating a racially mixed group would be disruptive,” he told a general that “if they don’t have a room and board in the next five minutes, you’re going to be in Afghanistan tomorrow morning.” (To read more, see *Father Ted Hesburgh: He Coached Me* by Tim Bourret and Digger Phelps.)

We hope you find this newsletter informative. Suggestions or ideas for future editions? Photos or links to share? Email the Commission’s Director of Communications and Public Engagement, Brian Walch, at bwalch@usccr.gov.

For information about the Commission, please visit <http://www.usccr.gov> and follow us on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).