

THE PRESIDENT'S TASK FORCE ON 21ST CENTURY POLICING

Laura Murphy

Laura W. Murphy is in her second tenure as Director of the ACLU's Washington Legislative Office, a position she first held from 1993-2005. Since returning Murphy has maintained strong relationships with leaders in the United States Congress and the Obama Administration to advance the ACLU's public policy priorities including national security, criminal justice, human rights, privacy, reproductive rights, civil rights and First Amendment issues.

Recently, Murphy played a leadership role in the passage of the Fair Sentencing Act of 2010 signed into law by President Obama on August 3, 2010—a law that reduced the sentencing disparity between crack and powder cocaine and that begins to address some of the racial disparities in the criminal justice system. Under her leadership, the ACLU Washington Legislative Office worked with Congress and the White House to gain support around federally-funded abortions for servicewomen and military dependents in the cases of rape or incest. The provision was signed into law on January 2, 2013.

Prior to her return to the ACLU, she founded and directed her own firm, Laura Murphy & Associates, L.L.C., where she utilized her 30 years of policy-making and political expertise to guide and advise corporate and non-profit clients at the national, state and local levels.

Murphy is well known for her notable legislative career advancing human rights and civil liberties. Both major newspapers on Capitol Hill, Roll Call and The Hill, selected Murphy as one of the 50 most influential lobbyists and one of 17 top nonprofit lobbyists in 1997 and 2003, respectively. In 1997, and again in 2003, the Congressional Black Caucus honored her for her significant contributions to legislation that advances civil rights and civil liberties. She has been given awards for her work with Congress and the White House by ACLU affiliates in Massachusetts, Mississippi and Maryland. Murphy has also been instrumental in garnering support from African Americans for same sex marriage, especially in her home state of Maryland. Murphy's family has a storied history in the civil rights movement and in the Black press, and they were intimately involved in the successful 2012 campaign for marriage equality in Maryland.

In previous professional positions Murphy served as chief of staff to a California Assembly Speaker and a cabinet member for the Mayor of the District of Columbia. Murphy has testified more than a dozen times before Congress and is an experienced national spokesperson. She has been a frequent guest on television and radio including PBS, "NBC Nightly News" and "The Today Show", "ABC World News", CNN, Fox News, and National Public Radio.