

Our Staff & Board

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Judith L. Lichtman

Senior Advisor

Judith L. Lichtman has been a guiding and influential force in the women's movement for more than 40 years. She stepped down as president of the National Partnership for Women & Families in 2004, and is presently senior advisor at the National Partnership. Her commitment, vision, and talent as an attorney and advocate have made a profound difference for women and families across the United States.

Lichtman often says: "I went to law school because being a lawyer gave me a license for activism." After receiving her law degree from the University of Wisconsin in 1965, Lichtman worked for the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Jackson State College, the Urban Coalition, the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, and as legal advisor to the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. In 1974, Lichtman became the executive director and first paid staff person for the Women's Legal Defense Fund (WLDF), which became the National Partnership for Women & Families in February 1998.



Under Lichtman's leadership, the National Partnership has been at the forefront of every major piece of civil rights legislation related to women and families for more than 40 years. Founded as a small volunteer group, the National Partnership has grown into a national organization with thousands of members and has become one of the country's most influential strategic forces, shaping national policy through its advocacy, lobbying, litigation, and public education. Lichtman's vision and the National Partnership's strength and direct leadership have resulted in the passage of some of the most important legal protections for American women and families, including the Pregnancy Discrimination Act of 1978 and the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) of 1993. In 1996, the National Partnership helped shape key provisions of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) that

make it easier for women and their families to get and keep health coverage. More recently, Lichtman has led efforts to promote patient protections and to bring paid family and medical leave to California.

Lichtman has been recognized by civic and legal organizations, business and labor leaders, and others for her strategic abilities, political savvy, effectiveness in creating powerful and diverse coalitions, and her tireless commitment to building a truly just society. President Clinton called Lichtman “a remarkable national treasure,” and Washingtonian magazine has identified her as one of Washington, DC’s most powerful women and Washingtonian of the Year in 1986. The Sara Lee Corporation awarded her the 1989 Frontrunner Award in the area of Humanities. That same year, the Women’s Bar Association named her Woman Lawyer of the Year. In 2000, Lichtman received the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights Hubert H. Humphrey Award for her contributions to the advancement of human and civil rights.

Says Lichtman, “For over 40 years, I’ve tried to make this world a better place for women and families. We’ve come a long way, but our work is far from done. My daughters, and all our children, deserve a future where every school and workplace is truly free of discrimination, and where all families have the support they need to succeed at home and on the job. I know from experience — if we can imagine it, we can make it happen.”

Lichtman lives in Washington, D.C., with her husband Elliott. They have two married daughters and four grandchildren.