



## FREE EXERCISE, HISTORIC RELIGIOUS PROPERTIES AND SACRED SITES: THE EFFECT OF RFRA & RLUIPA

Sponsored by the American University Washington College of Law Program on Information Justice and Intellectual Property, the Program on Law and Government, the National Park Service, and the Lawyers' Committee for Cultural Heritage Preservation

**Thursday, September 18, 2008**

**3:00 pm – 5:00 pm**

**American University Washington College of Law  
4801 Massachusetts Avenue NW, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor**

The Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA) created a cause of action for persons whose exercise of religion is substantially burdened by a government action, regardless of whether the burden results from a neutral law of general applicability. In 1997, the Supreme Court invalidated RFRA as applied to the States, in a case involving a town's denial of a permit to demolish a historic sanctuary building (the law still remains operative as to the Federal Government and to the District of Columbia). The response of Congress to that decision was its enactment of the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act of 2000 (RLUIPA). RLUIPA reinstated the general rule of RFRA -- that government action which substantially burdens religious exercise can be justified only if it is the least restrictive means of furthering a compelling government interest -- but this time, the law only would apply to Local, State or Federal action involving land use or institutionalized persons. How have the courts applied RFRA to Federal actions involving historic religious properties or sacred sites, and what effect might RLUIPA have on otherwise valid and neutral historic preservation laws? Drawing on recent case law and current litigation, the speakers will address these questions.

*Speakers will include:*

- **Julia Miller**, an attorney with the National Trust for Historic Preservation
- **Tersh Boasberg**, an attorney specializing in historic preservation, chairman of the DC Zoning Commission, and chair of the Historic Preservation Review Board
- **Louis Cohen**, partner, WilmerHale

*General Registration – no charge.*

CLE Accreditation (2 credits) will be applied for – *CLE Registration - \$35*

For more information and to register, please contact: Office of Special Events & Continuing Legal Education,  
American University Washington College of Law

Phone: 202.274.4075; Fax: 202.274.4079; [www.wcl.american.edu/secle](http://www.wcl.american.edu/secle), or [secle@wcl.american.edu](mailto:secle@wcl.american.edu)