

Dear Mr. Ruben,

My name is Maia Hutt and this past summer I was a recipient of an Equal Justice America Fellowship, which helped fund my work at the Washington Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights and Urban Affairs. As an intern on the Committee's Fair Housing Team, I had an opportunity to work directly with clients to provide direct services, conduct legal research, and draft trial motions in matters concerning fair housing. One of the major cases I was involved in this summer, *Borum et al v. Brentwood Village*, was a class-action on behalf of families who were being displaced from their homes due to gentrification. The case has since been written about in the *Washington Post* and various D.C. newspapers and represents a novel application of the disparate impact framework in Fair Housing Act litigation post-*Inclusive Communities*. As well as being a fascinating legal learning experience, my internship allowed me to interact with various stakeholders in the fair housing context, including community groups, non-profit organizations, tenants, landlords, and government agencies.

In addition, I got a chance to participate in pre-trial research and watch a trial involving a pregnancy discrimination case- *Hernandez v. Chipotle*. I had an opportunity to help draft proposed jury instructions and research various rules of evidence and their application in preparation for my supervisor's oral argument. Since I want to be a civil rights litigator, the opportunity to participate in an actual jury trial was invaluable and has helped me determine that this is the area of the law in which I want to pursue a career.

I would not have been able to accept my unpaid internship with the Washington Lawyers' Committee if it were not for the generous grant from Equal Justice America. This experience has not only been invaluable for me on a professional level, but allowed me to contribute to important civil rights work and help provide legal services to individuals and groups who have been traditionally underrepresented.

Sincerely,

Maia Hutt
Columbia University Law School



WASHINGTON LAWYERS' COMMITTEE
FOR CIVIL RIGHTS AND URBAN AFFAIRS

August 29, 2016

Mr. Dan Ruben
Executive Director
Equal Justice America
13540 East Boundary Road
Building II – Suite 204
Midlothian, VA 23112

Dear Mr. Ruben,

I write to report on the outstanding work and contributions of Maia Hutt to the Washington Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights and Urban Affairs (the "Committee") during her summer 2016 internship. Over the course of her internship, Maia proved herself to be an extremely competent and talented young attorney-in-training. Her positive demeanor and ability to work autonomously and within a team also made her particularly effective in all of her assignments.

Although hired as a legal intern for the Fair Housing Project ("FHP"), Maia additionally played a vital role in much of the Committee's work outside of the FHP, conducting legal research and drafting memos and briefs for Deputy Director of Litigation, Peter Romer-Friedman, and Equal Employment Opportunity Project Senior Staff Attorney, Dennis Corkery. Maia's work product focused on an array of legal issues ranging from mootness to whether courts characterize an "essential function" of an employment position under Title VII as a question of fact or law. She additionally drafted a memorandum in support of a motion for partial summary judgment under the Uniformed Service Employment and Reemployment Act, arguing that the plaintiff was entitled to summary judgment on liability for his benefit claim on two bases. The memorandum in support required Maia to analyze statutory and regulatory frameworks and apply case law with respect to the question of the deference due to administrative agency rules under *Chevron, U.S.A. Inc. v. Natural Resource Defense Council, Inc.*, 467 U.S. 837 (1984), *U.S. v. Mead Corp.*, 533 U.S. 218 (2001), and its progeny, all of which she did effectively.

With respect to the FHP, Maia drafted a series of legal memos for a host of cases focused on source of income, disability, and familial status discrimination under federal and state fair housing laws. For example, Maia drafted informative memos on applicable case precedent regarding the frustration of mission damages to which an organizational plaintiff is entitled under the Fair Housing Act ("FHA"), expounding upon the range of viable damages awards provided to plaintiffs by prior courts. Additionally, Maia's memo on the third prong of the standard set forth for motions for preliminary injunctions under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 65(a)—the balance of equities—and its application in the FHA context lent valuable support to a memorandum in support of the Committee's motion for a preliminary injunction in a significant housing discrimination case. Lastly, Maia's thorough and timely in-depth research on how courts have typically defined "irreparable harm" in the fair housing context additionally boosted the

arguments of this very same memorandum in support, illustrating how a loss of housing constitutes irreparable harm because of the unique value associated with the loss of one's home.

Finally, Maia excelled when engaging in direct client services for the Committee, both during intakes with clients and through written advocacy. The latter efforts included drafting a demand letter challenging a discriminatory refusal to rent and an administrative agency charge (for the District of Columbia Office of Human Rights), alleging source of income discrimination under District of Columbia fair housing law. She did an outstanding job with both assignments and was timely in her submission of these.

When evaluating her cumulative contributions and their positive impact on the Committee's work and its clients, it becomes clear that Maia made an indelible mark during her internship.

Given her accomplishments, it is my pleasure to provide you with my strongest endorsement of Maia Hutt. Should you wish to discuss Maia's work further, please feel free to contact me at catherine_cone@washlaw.org or 202-319-1000, ext. 122.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Catherine Cone".

Catherine Cone