

Vern Countryman Award

Each year NCLC awards the distinguished Vern Countryman Consumer Law Award to a public interest attorney whose special contributions to the practice of consumer law have strengthened and affirmed the rights of low-income Americans.

It's always difficult to select a winner because our community of consumer attorneys is fortunate to have many compassionate, accomplished, and dedicated members within its ranks,

but Gail Hillebrand's impressive record as a leader in advocating for vulnerable consumers has earned her this year's Countryman Award. Her approaches to defending consumers are creative, collaborative, and multi-layered. She is exceptionally capable, hard-working, and committed.

We're proud to recognize her as a leader in our community of consumer advocates. Our congratulations to Gail - and our thanks for speaking out for the interests of low-income consumers.

We share below the comments of two who have worked with her.

"Over the course of nearly 20 years as a consumer advocate, Gail has tirelessly - and successfully - worked to protect consumer interests on a wide range of issues in every imaginable forum, from the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve, to the uniform law commissions, to the California Legislature. Gail works

equally well with high power academics, high-pressure industry lobbyists, and grassroots community groups. She is an unsung hero of the consumer movement; a leader and a mentor; a tough and vigorous advocate against well-funded opponents.

"...Gail always has her eye on the prize of achieving justice for consumers, particularly the most vulnerable consumers. Her method for reaching that goal is

multi-pronged and multi-level, always aimed at building relationships, bringing people into the consumer movement who may have previously stood on the sidelines, and helping those already involved to be more effective in addressing highly technical issues that have real impacts on the lives of low- and moderate-income consumers."
-Elizabeth Imholtz (former Countryman winner)

"...no one is more respected as a representative of consumer interests than Gail. She is bright, articulate, and quick on

her feet, making her extremely effective at meetings. ..When Gail spoke, the committees listened.

"...If ever there was a triple threat, it is Gail: she is a litigator, a law reformer, and a scholar. Indeed, her talents don't end there, for she also is a frequent lobbyist before the California legislature. Over the course of her lengthy career at Consumers Union, Gail Hillebrand has been one of the consumer's best friends."
- Michael M. Greenfield

Please join us as we honor

**Gail
Hillebrand**

with the 2004

**Vern Countryman
Award**

Sunday, November 7, 12:00 pm

at the Awards Luncheon, in the Plaza Ballroom