The Right to Travel: Intersection with the Right to Privacy and a Personal Liberty

The fundamental right to travel within the jurisdiction of the United States.

Thursday – Jan. 6, 2011
4:00 - 5:00 pm
Refreshments available at 3:30 pm

Location:
Transportation Center
Chambers Hall - Ruan Conference Center – Lower Level
600 Foster St., Evanston

Abstract: The right to travel within the jurisdiction of the United States of America is a fundamental right inherent in citizenship that cannot be abridged without the due process. It has existed since before the creation of the United States, and the U.S. Constitution and Supreme Court recognize and protect the right to interstate travel. The travel right entails privacy and citizens are free to travel interstate anonymously, without government interference. The imposition of official photo identification for travel, traveler watch-list prescreening programs, and intrusive screening methods pose unreasonable burdens on the right to travel. These undermine the citizens’ rights to travel and privacy. These regulations require citizens to relinquish one fundamental right to exercise another. The original conception of the travel right embodies the right as a broadly based one that encompasses all modes of travel. If any single mode is limited, then the right is abridged.

Richard Sobel Bio: As a political scientist and policy analyst, Richard Sobel explores issues at the intersection of national security and civil liberties policies. These include privacy and identification policies as they apply to the right to travel and transportation policies. He is currently a Visiting Scholar at the Buffett Center for International and Comparative Studies and a faculty affiliate of the Transportation Center at Northwestern.

Dr. Sobel has been a research Fellow at the Shorenstein Center for Press, Politics and Public Policy at Harvard’s Kennedy School of Government and at the Berkman Center on Internet & Society at Harvard Law School. Besides serving as a Visiting Professor at Northwestern, he has taught and researched at Princeton, Smith, the University of Connecticut, and Harvard. He is founder and director of the Cyber Privacy Project, and a member of the Massachusetts Civil Liberties Union Technology and Privacy Committee.

Dr. Sobel’s articles include "The Demeaning of Identity and Personhood in National Identification Systems" (Journal of Law and Technology, 2002) and “The HIPAA Paradox: The Privacy Rule That’s Not” (Hastings Center Record, 2007). He is author or editor of 5 books, and is working on publications on the fundamental rights of citizenship and on why a national ID system violates basic rights and is ineffective. He has also contributed to amicus briefs to the U.S. Supreme Court in the Hittel and Crawford ID cases, and in the appellate case, Citizens for Health v. Leavitt. An advisor to Ramon Torres on this master’s thesis in Transportation, The Right to Travel: Intersection with the Right to Privacy, a Personal Liberty, they are coauthors on “The Right to Travel: Intersection with the Right to Privacy and a Personal Liberty” (Sobel & Torres 2010), tentatively accepted for publication.

Dr. Sobel’s op-eds and comments have appeared in the Boston Globe, Chicago Tribune, Christian Science Monitor, Los Angeles Times, New York Times, Newsday, USA Today, Time and Washington Post. He has been interviewed on NPR, WGN, CNN and CBS radio. He can be contacted at Richard-sobel@northwestern.edu.