

# Supreme Court Justice To Get 'Taste Of His Own Eminent Domain Medicine'

By Greg Szymanski  
1-23-6

East Coast activists want to build the 'Lost Liberty Inn' on the property of U.S. Supreme Court Justice David Souter. The measure is on the March 14 ballot in the small town of Weare NH, where Souter resides. This Sunday activists staged rally in Weare to 'turn the eminent domain tables' on Souter.

One of the more amusing stories making the rounds is how a little known activist group is trying to "turn the tables" on a Supreme Court Justice who corruptly ruled on extending government's power to take away private land under eminent domain.

U.S. Supreme Court Justice David Souter is getting a "taste of his own medicine" from a New Hampshire group called the Committee for the Preservation of Natural Rights and another California human rights group, both trying to make a loud public statement by

getting Souter's home in the small town of Weare, New Hampshire, seized under eminent domain.

Both activist groups have been angered and are leading the charge against a recent high court ruling, making it virtually "a walk in the park" for local, state and federal entities to seize people's homes and property for economic development under what has become a watered down version of the eminent domain laws.

Keith La Casse, one of the leaders of the New Hampshire group, said Sunday the wheels are in motion for the city of Weare to vote on the matter in a March 14 election.

"We went to Weare today and decided to march outside of Souter's home in order to draw attention on the inequities of the recent eminent domain ruling," La Casse told the Arctic Beacon as the group was beginning its protest march Sunday in Souter's home town of Weare, population 8,500.

La Casse said more than enough of the 25 signatures needed to bring the matter on the March ballot were gathered in order to make way for the building of a hotel on Souter's property, appropriately called "The Lost Liberty Inn."

Although organizers admitted taking Souter's is an uphill battle, one of the main reason for pursuing the hotel idea, using his property, is to draw national attention to the unfairness of the recent eminent domain ruling.

Prior to the recent Supreme court ruling, eminent domain was usually considered " a last resort' where people's interests and property took major precedent over state interests. Now, under the ruling, propriety interests in land essentially shifts from private ownership to "public takeover," as the high court relaxed many of the legal

protections against government land grabs.

A perfect example of the indiscriminant use of eminent domain is now taking place in New Orleans, as a federal judge last week cleared the way for the bulldozing of 44,000 homes in the 9<sup>th</sup>

Ward where many homes are still salvageable by using eminent domain.

Under the judge's corrupt ruling, he is allowing the city to bulldoze down privately strictly with "notice to residents" but without due process or a proper hearing in order to determine if many of the displaced citizens object to the city's land grab.

"We are losing the battle and need help as many good homes are being destroyed and property seized," said Brandon Darby in a conversation from New Orleans.

"There is so much corruption down here. Many homes are simply being stolen away as people have been purposely kept out of the city or when they return, authorities are making them jump through hoops."

While Darby is fighting the real street battle, back in New Hampshire the Natural Rights activists are trying to win the public relations battle. Besides LaCasse, Logan Clements of California has also been instrumental in bringing the unfairness of the Supreme Court ruling before the eyes of America.

"All we're trying to do is put an end to eminent domain abuse," Clements said, adding Souter deserves a taste of his own medicine. "Perhaps by having those who advocate or facilitate the unfairness feel what it's really like to be threatened with losing your property, then maybe they will understand why it needs to end."

La Casse and Clements said they have never personally spoken to Souter, but Kathy Arberg, a Supreme Court

spokeswoman, issued a statement that Souter was not commenting on the petition filed by the group and the Lost Liberty Hotel idea.

Clements added the Sunday rally in Weare, a protest starting in the city and then making its way to Souter's 200-year-old brown renovated farmhouse, is being held in the spirit of the famous Pine Tree Riot which took place in 1771.

During that year, feisty Weare colonists physically overtook officials appointed by King George III who fined them for longing white pines without government approval.

The petition to take Souter's home goes to a vote March 14, but La Casse and Clements said they were still gathering more signatutes on Sunday, gathering 10 in less than an hour with only one resident approached refusing to sigh.

Activists were also distributing copies during the protest of the Supreme Court's corrupt eminent domain ruling, titled *Kelo v. City of New London*, the case which lowered the legal standards concerning government land grabs.

The court ruled in the *Kelo* case that the city could seize homeowners' property to develop a hotel, convention center, office space and condominiums next to Pfizer Inc.'s new research headquarters.

In the case, the city successfully argued that tax revenues and new jobs from the development would benefit the public. The Pfizer complex was built, but seven homeowners challenged the rest of the development in court. The Supreme Court's ruling against them prompted many states, including New Hampshire, to examine their eminent domain laws.

The Sunday rally not only brought out activists, but also several residents who lost their property in the Kelo case were on hand to voice their support for the Lost Liberty Hotel idea.

Also at the rally, supporting the city, State Rep. Neal Kurk of Weare, who is also sponsoring two pieces of eminent domain legislation in New Hampshire, said the group's idea is preposterous and will be soundly defeated.

"You don't go after a judge personally because you disagree with his judgments. Most people see this as an act of revenge and an improper attack on the judicial system," said Kurk, who added that the protestors will not be allowed to enter Souther's property located on the outskirts of town."

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