

Jennifer Butler becomes chair of president's advisory council on poverty

by [Celeste Kennel-Shank](#) in the [December 23, 2015](#) issue

Jennifer Butler, CEO of the strategy group [Faith in Public Life](#), recently became chair of the President's Advisory Council on Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships.

"One of the key issues we're looking at is criminal justice reform," Butler said of the council's meetings with her as chair. "We also talked about rural poverty, which gets left out of a lot of conversations."

Other members of the council include researchers and leaders of denominations, religious groups, and secular organizations working on issues of poverty and inequality.

The White House [describes the Obama administration's charge to the council](#) as "identifying best practices and successful modes of delivering social services" as well as making policy recommendations.

In its first meeting with current members, the council talked about programs already making a difference, Butler said. One example was [the Promise Zones Initiative](#), in which low-income areas create plans for community development that can then garner government funding.

"We're trying to look at successes and see what can be further developed," she said.

Before founding Faith in Public Life, Butler represented the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) at the United Nations from 1996 to 2005.