LSC

Legal Services Corporation
America's Partner For Equal Justice

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

RESOLUTION

In Support of Enhanced Private Attorney Involvement with LSC-Funded Programs

Whereas, the Legal Services Corporation (LSC) has long recognized that the overarching values of private attorney involvement to LSC-funded programs are increased access, increased human and capital resources, and increased *pro bono* commitment; and

Whereas, the LSC report, *Documenting the Justice Gap in America: The Current Unmet Civil Legal Needs of Low-Income Americans*, found that 50 percent of the potential clients requesting assistance from an LSC grantee were turned away for lack of resources on the part of the program; and

Whereas, the LSC *Strategic Directions 2006-2010* calls upon LSC to increase public awareness of and support for legal services to low-income persons in order to respond appropriately to more of their legal needs; and

Whereas, the *LSC Performance Criteria* consider, in evaluating a program's legal representation and other activities intended to benefit the low-income population in its service area, whether that program effectively integrates private attorneys into its work in order to supplement the amount and effectiveness of its representation and other services; and

Whereas, the Provision for the Delivery of Legal Services Committee of the LSC Board of Directors focused its 2006 meetings on highlighting the potential, opportunities and challenges of private attorney involvement and on determining ways in which this critical resource can be used more effectively by LSC-funded programs as a means to help close the justice gap; and

Whereas, at its January 2007 meeting, the LSC Board of Directors unanimously adopted a strategic work plan entitled *Action Plan for Private Attorney Involvement: Help Close the Justice Gap, Unleash the Power of Pro Bono*, which highlights the benefits of engaging private attorneys to help represent clients of LSC-funded programs and describes ways in which the LSC Board and staff will work to expand private attorney involvement;

Whereas, the American Bar Association's Model Rule 6.1 and similar state bar rules note the ethical obligation of every attorney to provide *pro bono* legal assistance to those unable to afford legal assistance;

Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved that the Legal Services Corporation Board of Directors, in its efforts to help close the justice gap, supports and encourages private attorney involvement with LSC-funded programs and urges governing boards of LSC-funded programs to:

Collaborate with other organizations and entities in their service area to develop and facilitate educational efforts that demonstrate the extent of the unmet civil legal need and encourage collective responsibility within the service area by both public and private entities to help meet this unmet civil legal need;

Collaborate with other organizations and entities in their service areas to develop effective strategies for engaging lawyers in *pro bono* representation and other services that benefit low-income persons;

Consider including in that collaboration organizations and entities such as state and local bar associations, access to justice entities, law firms and corporate law departments, law schools and clinics, government and military law offices, and state and federal courts; and

Develop strategies that encourage *pro bono*, including creative recruitment methods and delivery models, attorney practice and continuing legal education rules, and training, mentoring, support, and recognition of volunteers.

Be it Further Resolved that the Legal Services Corporation Board of Directors, in its national leadership position, will promote, support and encourage private attorney involvement initiatives by publicizing and recognizing private attorney involvement in the work of LSC-funded programs and by collaborating with national, state and local organizations to create opportunities for such publicity and recognition.

Adopted by the Board of Directors
On April 28, 2007

Frank B. Strickland
Chairman

Victor M. Fortuno
Corporate Secretary