RESOLUTION
OF
BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF
LAND OF LINCOLN LEGAL ASSISTANCE FOUNDATION, INC.

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

Whereas, the Legal Services Corporation and the programs it funds, including Land of Lincoln Legal Assistance Foundation, have 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, at its April 2007 meeting the Board of Directors of the Legal Services Corporation adopted Resolution 2007-003 supporting and encouraging private attorney involvement and urging governing boards of LSC-funded programs to collaborate with other organizations to effectively engage lawyers in *pro bono* representation and other services that benefit low-income persons; and

Whereas, the LSC Board of Directors resolution builds upon the following national LSC initiatives:

- The October 2005 LSC report, *Documenting the Justice Gap in America: The Current Unmet Civil Legal Needs of Low-Income Americans,* which 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;

- The *LSC Strategic Directions 2006-2010,* which 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;

- The *LSC Performance Criteria,* which 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;

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

- The unanimous adoption in January 2007 by LSC Board of Directors of 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;

- The American Bar Association's Model Rule 6.1 and similar state bar rules note the professional responsibility of every lawyer to provide *pro bono* legal assistance to persons of limited means.

Whereas, in Illinois:

- The February 2005 Legal Needs Study, "The Legal Aid Safety Net: A Report on the Legal Needs of Low-Income Illinoisans" found that almost half of the low-income households in Illinois experienced one or more legal problems in 2003 and had assistance for only one out of every six (16.4%) legal problems. The Study recommended that the system needed to encourage and help lawyers in private practice to serve the legal needs of low-income persons;
- The Illinois Supreme Court appointed a Special Supreme Court Committee on Pro Bono Publico Legal Service and that Committee issued a report in December 2003 recommending adoption of a rule to strengthen the Illinois Rules of Professional Conduct regarding pro bono service, including mandatory reporting of pro bono service;
- In 2005, the Illinois Supreme Court amended Supreme Court Rule 756 requiring attorneys to report on annual pro bono service; and
- In 2007, the Illinois Equal Justice Coalition convened a Pro Bono Summit, funded by The Lawyers Trust Fund of Illinois, with supporting grants from the Chicago Bar Foundation and the Illinois Bar Foundation. Attendees included judges, private attorneys and legal services attorneys from the service areas of Land of Lincoln Legal Assistance Foundation Inc. and Prairie State Legal Services. The purpose was to identify new strategies to increase pro bono participation, and to most effectively utilize pro bono lawyers in the provision of legal services to low income individuals and families in need of legal help.

Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved that the Board of Directors of Land of Lincoln Legal Assistance Foundation, in an effort to help close the justice gap in Illinois, supports and encourages private attorney involvement with Land of Lincoln Legal Assistance Foundation and will endeavor to:

- Collaborate with other organizations and entities in Land of Lincoln Legal Assistance Foundation's 65-county service area to develop and facilitate educational efforts and demonstrate the extent of the unmet civil legal need and encourage collective responsibility within those 65 counties by both public and private entities to help meet this unmet civil legal need;

- Collaborate with other organizations and entities in Land of Lincoln Legal Assistance Foundation's 65-county service area to develop effective strategies for engaging lawyers in *pro bono* representation and other services that benefit low-income persons;

- 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 Board of Directors of Land of Lincoln Legal Assistance Foundation will promote, support and encourage private attorney involvement initiatives by publicizing and recognizing private attorney involvement in the work of Land of Lincoln Legal Assistance Foundation and by collaborating with national, state and local organizations to create opportunities for such publicity and recognition.

Adopted by the Board of Directors of Land of Lincoln Legal Assistance Foundation on September 14, 2007

Russell K. Scott, Board President