

**Resolution  
Of  
Board of Directors of  
Legal Aid Bureau, Inc. of Maryland**

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

**Whereas**, the Legal Services Corporation and the programs it funds, including the Legal Aid Bureau, Inc., serving the State of Maryland throughout its twenty three counties and the city of Baltimore, 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 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 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 publico* legal services to persons of limited means.

**Whereas**, in the State of Maryland there is robust commitment and promotion of pro bono services to low income persons, led by the Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals, Maryland's highest court, formalized in Rule 16-900 passed in April 2002 , which establishes a Standing Committee of the Court of Appeals on Pro Bono Legal Services and Local Pro Bono Committees in each of Maryland's counties, and mandates annual reporting of pro bono activity by all Maryland lawyers; in 2008, the Chief Judge has furthered such services to low income persons by the appointment of the Access to Justice Commission, charged with studying and making recommendations on pro se litigation in the State; and has called for pro bono assistance for persons facing foreclosure, to which over 600 lawyers have responded; and

**Whereas**, the Maryland State Bar Association, and a number of County Bar Associations actively promote pro bono services and recruit and recognize pro bono providers; local law school clinics solicit and provide services for cases referred by the Legal Aid Bureau and other legal service providers; law firms are forming pro bono committees to which the Bureau refers pro bono cases; and various government entities have established pro bono policies for their lawyers; and

**Whereas**, the Bureau's 2006-2007 study, *The Unmet Needs of Low-Income Maryland Residents and Maryland's Low-Income Communities* found that unmet legal needs persist unrelentingly among Maryland's low income population, particularly in the areas of housing, health and public benefits, and that the Legal Aid eligible population continues to increase.

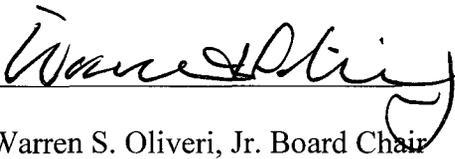
**Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved** that the Board of Directors of the Legal Aid Bureau, Inc., in an effort to help close the justice gap in Maryland, supports and encourages private attorney involvement with the Legal Aid Bureau, Inc. and will endeavor to:

- Collaborate with other organizations and entities in the State of Maryland to develop and facilitate educational efforts that demonstrate the extent of the unmet civil legal need and encourage collective responsibility within Maryland by both public and private entities to help meet this unmet civil legal need;
- Collaborate with other organizations and entities in Maryland to develop effective strategies for engaging lawyers in pro bono representation and other services that benefit low-income persons;
- Include in that collaboration organizations and entities Statewide, such as the Maryland State Bar Association, the Baltimore City and the County Bar Associations, minority and other specialty Bar Associations, access to justice entities, law firms and corporate legal departments, Maryland and Washington, D.C. law schools and their clinics, government and military law offices, and County, State and Federal courts;

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

**Adopted by the Board of Directors of the Legal Aid Bureau, Inc on October 22, 2008.**



Warren S. Oliveri, Jr. Board Chair