

**RESOLUTION  
OF  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF  
LEGAL AID SOCIETY OF MIDDLE TENNESSEE AND THE CUMBERLANDS  
In Support of Enhanced Private Attorney Involvement**

**Whereas**, the Legal Services Corporation (LSC) and the grantees it funds, including the Legal Aid Society of Middle Tennessee and the Cumberland (the Legal Aid Society), have long recognized that the overarching values of private attorney involvement to LSC-funded grantees 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 LSC adopted Resolution 2007-003 supporting and encouraging private attorney involvement and urging governing boards of LSC-funded grantees 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 grantee;
- 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 grantee's legal representation and other activities intended to benefit the low-income population in its service area, whether that grantee 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 grantees 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 grantees 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; and

**Whereas**, in the State of Tennessee

- The *Comprehensive Legal Needs Survey* prepared by the University of Tennessee College of Social Work Office of Research and Public Service in 2004 for the Legal Aid Society and the Tennessee Alliance for Legal Services (TALS) documents the extent of the need for civil legal services among low-income people in Tennessee;
- TALS and the Tennessee Bar Association (TBA) Access to Justice Committee have taken several access to justice initiatives, including the recent TBA Corporate Counsel *Pro Bono* Initiative; and
- The Tennessee Rules of Professional Conduct, Rule 6.1, "*Pro Bono Publico* Representation" provides that "a lawyer should render *pro bono publico* legal services" and "should voluntarily contribute financial support to organizations that provide legal services to persons of limited means;" and
- The *Legal Aid Society Strategic Directives for 2007-2009* includes a strategic directive (V) "Increase the involvement of the private bar and other volunteers in our work" and includes performance targets for 2007.

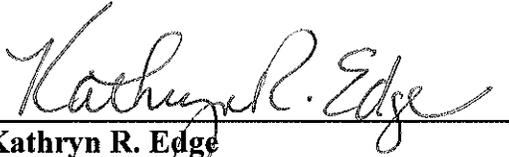
**Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved** that the Board of Directors of the Legal Aid Society, in an effort to help close the justice gap in the State of Tennessee, supports and encourages private attorney involvement with the Legal Aid Society and will endeavor to:

- Collaborate with other organizations and entities in the State of Tennessee to develop and facilitate educational efforts that demonstrate the extent of the unmet civil legal need and encourage collective responsibility within the State of Tennessee by both public and private entities to help meet this unmet civil legal need;
- Collaborate with other organizations and entities in the State of Tennessee 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 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 Board of Directors of the Legal Aid Society will promote, support, and encourage private attorney involvement initiatives by publicizing and recognizing private attorney involvement in the work of the Legal Aid Society and various *pro bono* programs it administers 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 Society on June 26, 2007.**



**Kathryn R. Edge**  
**President of the Board of Directors**



**Valerie Martin**  
**Secretary of the Board of Directors**