

**RESOLUTION  
OF  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF LEGAL AID OF WESTERN MISSOURI**

**In Support of Enhanced Private Attorney Involvement**

**Whereas**, the Board of Trustees of Legal Aid of Western Missouri, an LSC funded program, has long recognized the value of private attorney involvement and is committed to increase the provision of *pro bono* legal services that benefit low-income people; and

**Whereas**, this Board of Trustees' Resolution is based in part on Resolution 2007-003 adopted by the Board of Directors of the Legal Services Corporation 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 Legal Services Corporation Board of Directors' Resolution 2007-003 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 attorneys' 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 Missouri**

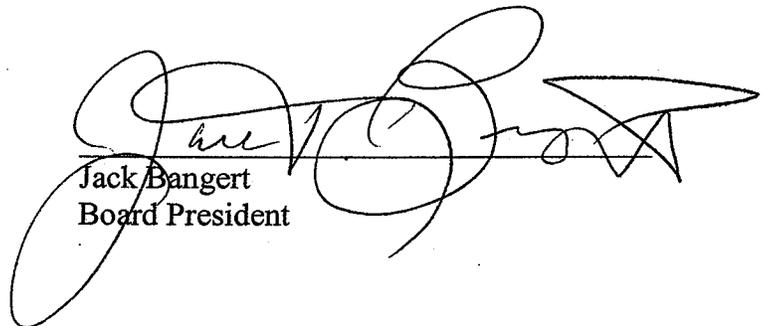
- Rule 6.1 of the Missouri Supreme Court Rules of Professional Conduct reaffirms the professional responsibility of every lawyer to provide *pro bono* legal assistance to persons of limited means;
- Supreme Court Judges of Missouri have actively promoted meaningful access to *pro bono* services by encouraging all members of the state bar to participate in the provision of *pro bono* services;
- The Missouri Bar has recognized the vast unmet legal needs of low-income Missourians and promotes *pro bono* involvement by encouraging its members to set an annual goal of providing a minimum of 40 hours of *pro bono* work, and by annually acknowledging lawyers who provide exemplary *pro bono* services; and
- Legal Aid of Western Missouri realizes the critical need to close the "Justice Gap" and is committed to working to increase the provision *pro bono* services;

**Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved** that the Board of Trustees of Legal Aid of Western Missouri in an effort to close the gap in Missouri, supports and encourages private attorney involvement with Legal Aid of Western Missouri and will endeavor to:

- Collaborate with other organizations and entities in western Missouri to develop and facilitate educational efforts that demonstrate the extent of the unmet civil legal need and encourage collective responsibility within western Missouri by both public and private entities to help meet the unmet civil legal need;
- Collaborate with other organizations and entities in western Missouri to develop effective strategies for engaging lawyers in *pro bono* representation and other services that benefit low-income persons;
- Continue efforts with the Missouri Bar and KCMBA and consider collaboration with other organizations and entities such as local and specialty bars throughout the Legal Aid of Western Missouri service area; and,

- Develop additional 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 Trustees of Legal Aid of Western Missouri will promote, support and encourage private attorney involvement initiatives by publicizing and recognizing with national, state and local organizations to create opportunities for such publicity and recognition.

Adopted by the Board of Trustees of Legal Aid of Western Missouri on this 13th  
day of November, 2007.

  
Jack Bangert  
Board President