

RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF
THE MICRONESIAN LEGAL SERVICES CORPORATION
RESOLUTION 2008-4

In Support of Enhanced Private Attorney Involvement with
Micronesian Legal Services Corporation

Whereas, the Legal Services Corporation and the programs it funds, including Micronesian Legal Services Corporation [MLSC], 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 bar rules note the professional responsibility of every lawyer to provide *pro bono* legal assistance to persons of limited means;

Whereas, in the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Republic of Palau, the Federated States of Micronesia, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands [herein collectively referred to as "Micronesia"]:

Based on the Census for year 2000, it is estimated that *one hundred seventy eight thousand three hundred seventeen* (178,317) Micronesians or 72.5% of the entire population are under the poverty level;

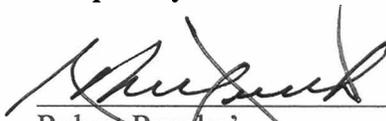
MLSC is strongly committed to promote access to justice for the low income population and to broaden the scope of services provided.

Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved that the MLSC Board of Directors, in an effort to help close the justice gap in Micronesia, supports and encourages private attorney involvement with MLSC and will continue and expand its efforts to:

1. Collaborate with other organizations in Micronesia to develop strategies to recruit lawyers willing and able to do *pro bono* representation and other services, to meet the need for civil legal representation of the low-income population;
2. Collaborate with other organizations in Micronesia to develop effective delivery systems and to guarantee adequate, timely and suitable representation;
3. 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 MLSC Board of Directors will continue and expand its efforts to promote, support and encourage private attorney involvement initiatives by publicizing and recognizing private attorney involvement in the work of MLSC and by collaborating with national, state and local organizations to create opportunities for such publicity and recognition.

Adopted by the MLSC Board of Directors, on May 12, 2008



Robert Ruecho
President, Board of Directors



Lucia Blanco-Maratita, Esq.
Secretary-Treasurer, Board of Directors