

June 19, 2007

Frank Strickland, Chairman
Helaine Barnett, President
Legal Services Corporation
3333 K Street, NW 3rd Floor
Washington, DC 20007-3522

350 Broadway
6th Floor
New York, New York
10013-9998
phone 212-431-7200
646-442-3600
fax 212-431-7232
website www.lsnyc.org

Andrew Scherer
*Executive Director
and President*

Fern Schair
Board Chair

Dear Frank and Helaine,

We are very pleased to report that at its meeting last week, the Board of Directors of Legal Services for New York City (LSNY) passed the enclosed pro bono resolution. Our resolution was based on the model resolution distributed to grantees by LSC in late May.

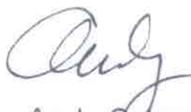
We at LSNY are deeply committed to expanding our use of pro bono resources to leverage our ability to serve clients. Our pro bono work has been growing by leaps and bounds. To acknowledge the many attorneys who have been helping us on a pro bono basis, we held a highly successful reception last week at Simpson Thacher, at which we celebrated the contributions of over 300 attorneys in the past year. We are enclosing copies of the program from that event for your information. As you will see, Remarks were delivered at the reception by the new President of the New York State Bar Association, symbolic of our close collaboration with the bar that enriches our pro bono efforts.

Many thanks for taking the lead on fostering greater pro bono activity throughout the legal services community nationally. If there's anything more we can do to help with the national effort, please do not hesitate to let us know.

Sincerely,



Fern Schair,
Board Chair



Andy Scherer
Executive Director

Enclosure

**RESOLUTION OF THE
BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF LEGAL SERVICES FOR NEW YORK CITY
In Support of Enhanced Private Attorney Involvement
with LSC-Funded Programs**

Whereas, the Legal Services Corporation and the programs it funds, including Legal Services for New York City, 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 New York State:

- Studies have similarly demonstrated that only a fraction of the legal need of low income households can be met with existing resources;
- Ethics rules for attorneys strongly encourage *pro bono* service; and
- The Courts, legal services providers and the New York State Bar Association and local bar associations have strongly committed to the expansion and coordination of *pro bono* efforts.

Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved that the Board of Directors of Legal Services for New York City, in an effort to help close the justice gap in New York State supports and encourages private attorney involvement with Legal Services for New York City and will continue and expand its efforts to:

- Collaborate with other organizations and entities in New York City to develop and facilitate educational efforts that demonstrate the extent of the unmet civil legal need and encourage collective responsibility within New York City by both public and private entities to help meet this unmet civil legal need;
- Collaborate with other organizations and entities in New York State 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 Legal Services for New York City 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 Legal Services for New York City and by collaborating with national, state and local organizations to create opportunities for such publicity and recognition.

Adopted by the Board of Directors of Legal Services for New York City on June 12, 2007

Fern Schair, Board Chair