

**RESOLUTION
OF
BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF
OHIO STATE LEGAL SERVICES ASSOCIATION**

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

Whereas, the Legal Services Corporation and the programs it funds, including Ohio State Legal Services Association, 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 the 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 which note the professional responsibility of every lawyer to provide *pro bono* legal assistance to persons of limited means; and

Whereas, in Ohio:

- The 1991 Spangenberg Report found that only 17% of low-income Ohioans' legal needs were being met; and
- Despite improvements in state funding for civil legal services since that time, a huge unmet need still exists; and
- The report of the Ohio Supreme Court's Task Force on Pro Se and Indigent Litigants, issued in April, 2006, contains many excellent recommendations for enhancing delivery of civil legal services, including pro bono services; and
- Southeastern Ohio, served by Ohio State Legal Services Association's field program, Southeastern Ohio Legal Services, is the poorest region of the State and has the fewest other resources to provide civil legal services to the poor (no large law firms, no law schools, no corporate headquarters); and
- Good progress has been made in many of the counties served by Southeastern Ohio Legal Services toward building strong pro bono programs in collaboration with local bar associations; and
- The Ohio State Bar Association has been a willing and enthusiastic partner in developing pro bono resources; and

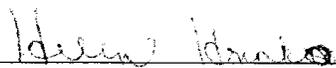
- The Ohio Legal Assistance Foundation, with help from a grant from the Ohio Supreme Court, has committed meaningful resources to enhancement of pro bono in southeastern Ohio;

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

- Collaborate with other organizations and entities in Ohio, and especially southeastern Ohio, to develop and facilitate educational efforts that demonstrate the extent of the unmet civil legal need and encourage collective responsibility within Ohio by both public and private entities to help meet this unmet civil legal need; and
- Collaborate with other organizations and entities in southeastern Ohio to develop effective strategies for engaging lawyers in *pro bono* representation and other services that benefit low-income persons; 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 Ohio State Legal Services Association will promote, support and encourage private attorney involvement initiatives by publicizing and recognizing private attorney involvement in the work of Ohio State Legal Services Association and by collaborating with national, state and local organizations to create opportunities for such publicity and recognition.

Adopted by the Board of Directors of Ohio State Legal Services Association on June 16, 2007.



Helen Hrinko, Board Chair