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The Honorable Eric Holder
Attorney General
Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20530

Dear Mr. Attorney General:

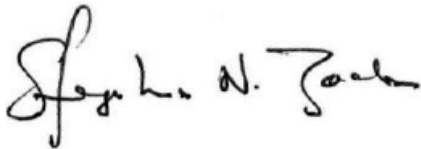
On behalf of the American Bar Association and its nearly 400,000 members, I am writing to ask you to include in your budget request for Fiscal Year 2012 full and adequate funding for the John R. Justice Student Loan Repayment Program.

With the average educational loan debt for law schools averaging almost \$60,000 for public schools and over \$90,000 in private schools, many recent law school graduates forego careers in public service to pursue more lucrative careers in the private sector. Therefore, prosecutor and public defender offices have serious difficulties in recruiting and retaining qualified attorneys.

Only in its first year, the John R. Justice Program has already provided attorneys in all fifty states with assistance in repaying their student loans in exchange for at least three years of government service. This important program needs continued full funding, both to assist our justice system in retaining qualified attorneys, and to create an incentive for promising recent law school graduates to explore careers in public service.

Thank you very much for your consideration of full support for the John R. Justice program for FY2012. The ABA looks forward to continuing to work with you on this and other matters of importance to the legal profession and to our system of justice.

Sincerely,



Stephen N. Zack