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## Funding News

✎ **New State Funding in Arizona and Illinois** - Legal services advocates in Arizona and Illinois report major victories in obtaining new funding from their legislatures this year. In Arizona, the legislature has appropriated \$1,000,000 in temporary assistance to needy families block grant funds (TANF) for legal and lay advocacy for domestic violence victims and their children. A coalition that included the Arizona State Bar, the Arizona Bar Foundation, domestic violence programs and legal services providers worked hard to obtain this funding. The funding is for one year, beginning in July 2000. In Illinois, a \$500,000 appropriation for access to justice initiatives was approved by the legislature as part of the overall budget. This success was the result of much hard work over several years. The funds may be used for several purposes: legal information centers, regional legal services hotlines, dispute resolution centers, self-help assistance desks and civil legal services providers. For more information or to report legislative funding efforts, contact Meredith McBurney, Project Director, ABA Project to Expand Resources for Legal Services (PERLS) at 303/329-8091.

✎ **Massachusetts Lawyers “Walk to the Hill”** - On May 16, 2000, over 150 lawyers from the Boston area descended on Beacon Hill, where the state legislature is located, to lobby their representatives and senators for more state funding for legal services. The effort was co-sponsored by the Boston Bar Association and the Equal Justice Coalition, a statewide group composed of individuals and organizations from the business, religious, medical and other communities, as well as the bar and judiciary. Legal services advocates seek to increase state funding, which currently totals \$3.8 million in general appropriation and \$3.7 million in special project funding, by \$18 million over the next three years. Organizers, who believe that legislators were impressed that lawyers would make this effort on behalf of legal services, judged the event a success. The incoming president of the Boston Bar has pledged to do it again next year. For more information, contact Marjorie Decker, Director, Equal Justice Coalition, at 617/973-6513.

✎ **IOLTA Litigation Update** - Briefing is underway in the U.S. Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals in the remanded case of *Washington Legal Foundation, et al. v Texas Equal Access to Justice Foundation, et al.* The appellants' opening brief is due on May 30 and appellees' response is due at the end of June. All briefing should be completed in the case by the end of July. In similar litigation in the U.S. Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, *Washington Legal Foundation, et al. v Legal Foundation of Washington, et al.*, the parties are awaiting a decision from the three-judge panel. In that suit, Washington Legal Foundation challenged the application of the IOLTA concept to limited practice officers - individuals licensed by the Supreme Court of Washington to practice law for the limited purpose of real estate closings. Defendants prevailed in the district court and plaintiffs appealed the decision. For more information on either case, contact Bev Groudine, Counsel, ABA Commission on IOLTA, at 312/988-5771.

## Pro Bono Developments

✎ **Minnesota Supreme Court Rejects Mandatory Pro Bono Reporting** - The Minnesota Supreme Court recently denied a petition to require attorneys to report pro bono legal services. The petition, filed by the Minnesota State Bar Association, requested that the Court amend the Rules of the Supreme Court for Registration of Attorneys. In denying the petition, the Court stated that

“mandatory pro bono reporting would not significantly advance or assist in the obligation of lawyers to provide pro bono services.” For further information, contact Steve Scudder, Counsel, ABA Standing Committee on Pro Bono and Public Service, at 312/988-5768.

📌 **Louisiana Access to Justice Committee Moves Forward with Initiatives** - The Louisiana Access to Justice (AJC) Committee recently drafted a model law firm pro bono policy, which it will provide to Louisiana law firms. The Committee presented the policy to the Louisiana State Bar Association (LSBA) Board of Governors, which noted its support of the Committee’s actions. The AJC is also working with the LSBA’s Court Rules Committee to develop a standard pauper’s form for adoption statewide. Currently, there are many parishes utilizing different pauper’s forms and adopting various interpretations of the pauper’s law, which is a burden to legal services providers and private attorneys handling pro bono cases. The Court Rules Committee agrees with the AJC’s proposal to adopt one state-wide pauper’s form, which the Court Rules Committee will eventually submit to the LSBA House of Delegates for review and comment, and if accepted, to the Louisiana Supreme Court. For more information, contact Monte Mollere, Access to Justice Director, Louisiana State Bar Association, at 504/619-1600 or mmollere@lsba.org

### Hot On the Web

📌 **The ABC Manual: Starting and Operating a Business Law Pro Bono Project** - This publication, produced jointly by ABA Section of Business Law’s Pro Bono Committee and the National Legal Aid and Defender Association, provides the nuts and bolts of starting a new business law pro bono program. It also features a directory of resources and technical assistance providers. To view a copy of the manual, visit the Section’s Pro Bono Committee’s website at <http://www.abanet.org/buslaw/probono/ABC.pdf>



WASHINGTON UPDATE

As reported previously, the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, State originally announced its intention to mark up its funding bill on or around May 23. Not unexpectedly, the various subcommittees are finding it difficult to come to agreement on many of these bills, and tentatively scheduled markups have been postponed. The latest news is that both the House and Senate CJS Subcommittees may now mark up their respective bills as early as the week of June 5. This is the week that Congress returns from its Memorial Day recess, which began on Friday, May 26. If you have not done so already, please use the Memorial Day recess to meet with your Members of Congress back in the District. More information, including lists of the Subcommittee members, is provided in the new LSC Action Alert posted on the GAO website at <http://congress.nw.dc.us/bar/>. For further information, contact Julie Strandlie, Director, ABA Grassroots Operations at 202/662-1764.

For more information about specific items, call the contact person listed for that item. To contribute items to future issues of *LEGAL SERVICES NOW*, or for general information about this bulletin, contact Bev Groudine at 312/988-5771, fax 312/988-5483 or e-mail [bgroudine@staff.abanet.org](mailto:bgroudine@staff.abanet.org).