I. **Public Awareness Committee**

**High-Priority Action Step**

- Complete a report based on the ATJ hearings and conduct a final hearing, possibly at the Supreme Court or Legislature; develop a plan to use the report strategically to accomplish the Commission’s goals (in particular, promoting pro bono participation; ensuring that attorneys understand the purpose of IOLTA; building legislative support for legal aid funding). Possible elements of such a plan would include presentations to the Legislature, state and local bar organizations, and the judiciary; special sections in state bar publications; and a press and editorial campaign.

**Important Action Steps**

- Explore possibilities for television and radio coverage, advertising, and public service announcements based on the report and the legal needs crisis

- Develop a community legal education plan, including efforts directed at schools, law enforcement, organizations working with low-income people, and the general public, especially low-income people; and including general information about the law and legal procedures; information aimed at preventing and resolving legal problems; and information about the availability of legal assistance.

II. **Resource Development Committee**

**High-Priority Action Step**

- Prepare to move forward when the time is ripe to seek increased funding from the Legislature for civil legal aid. Consider a broad range of funding options, including increasing the current filing fee surcharge, a specific appropriation, state-funded loan repayment program, other vehicles. Do at least as much in 2010 as in 2009 (presentation to Judiciary Committees, preparation of legislative packets). Use the report developed from the hearings strategically. Consider strategic use of a legal needs study. Consider other options such as Lobby Day, developing one on one relationships between Commissioners and legislators, hiring a lobbyist (currently no funds to do so) or using the Bar’s lobbyist.

**Important Action Steps**

- Advocate for increased federal funding for civil legal aid and removal of restrictions. Seek to ensure that entire Mississippi Congressional delegation supports LSC federal funding for legal aid.
Action Steps that May Emerge from Others; or Longer-Term Efforts

- Work with the Bar Foundation to develop ways to increase IOLTA yield, such as awards for banks.

- Seek reauthorization of “Justice for All” car tags and promote participation.

- Explore possibilities for using the Community Reinvestment Act to promote IOLTA participation or obtain legal aid funding.

III. Delivery System Committee

High-Priority Action Steps

- Identify concrete steps to increase the number of pro bono attorneys in every county in the state, including changes in the current pro bono structure where necessary. Areas for consideration include: structure of MVLP; LSC-funded programs’ “private attorney involvement” efforts and referral processes; treatment of cases that cannot be handled by LSC-funded programs; and placement of volunteer attorneys through organizations in addition to MVLP and LSC-funded providers.

- Help MVLP develop attorney contacts around the state; facilitate local meetings to promote pro bono; reach out to local bars.

- Develop other pro bono recruitment efforts, possibly including recruitment campaign launched by the Bar President and Chief Justice; letter to new lawyers from Chief Justice; analysis of 6.1 filings to see who is not participating and developing appropriate recruitment strategies.

- Help MVLP to work with the judiciary to develop procedural and scheduling devices to accommodate attorneys handling pro bono cases (e.g. docket priority).

- Develop ways to increase pro bono recognition, including increased prestige and visibility for awards. Ensure that procedures for recognizing pro bono efforts include all attorneys doing pro bono work. Explore ways to make better use of Rule 6.1 reporting to recognize and thank attorneys who are providing service and making contributions.

- When the commentary on the rule relating to unbundling/limited scope representation and the model rule on conflicts/call center are adopted, develop an “unveiling” ethics presentation (if possible, at Summer School for Lawyers) that also promotes pro bono service, using the Commission’s video and findings from the report, as appropriate.

- Develop a model for local Access to Justice committees or similar entities to develop local initiatives to ex-
pand access to civil justice, involving local judges and attorneys and new partners, operating with recognition from the Commission/Supreme Court and reporting back. Launch two-four pilot projects based on the model.

- Launch coordinated efforts to make the courts more receptive to self-represented litigants, including the following steps:
  - Develop educational materials and events to guide judges in dealing effectively with self-represented litigants, including revision of the portion of the trial judges’ bench guide that deals with working with self-represented litigants; adapting existing educational material already available at the national level; looking into the possibility of obtaining funding to bring national trainers in for a judicial conference.
  - Develop educational materials and events for guiding court clerks in dealing with self-represented litigants, including preparation of a guide/FAQs explaining the difference between providing information and giving legal advice; uniform signs approved by Supreme Court; training events for clerks; outreach to all clerks associations.
  - Prepare a video/CD to instruct self-represented litigants how to act in court; prepare basic instructions about court process for self-represented litigants, making them available on line and in the courts.
  - Develop pilot self-help centers for self-represented litigants.

**Important Action Steps**

- Seek to increase pro bono-related activity by local bars; encourage ATJ leaders to become involved in local bars; publicize successful efforts by local bars to expand access.

- Work with courts, judges and clerks to ensure that referral information to MVLP is available in all courthouses; work with Administrative Office of Courts to arrange for a presentation on MVLP at Judges Conference.

- Work with MVLP to develop a list of attorneys available to take appellate cases and make list available in courts; possibly adapt Appellate Manual for self-represented litigants.

- Develop initiatives to encourage law students to become involved in pro bono.

- Advocate for a Supreme Court policy statement on systematic waivers of filing fees for low-income people.

- Develop initiatives to meet the legal needs of people above the legal services eligibility level who are nevertheless unable to afford counsel.
IV. **Action Steps Supported by Commission; Other Action Steps Designated as a “Passion” Priority**

- Initiate regular meetings of providers, as a separate subgroup under Delivery Systems Committee, and with the participation of a few Commission representatives who are not providers.

- Explore ways to increase use of lay advocates.

- Develop a set of metrics to chart progress (e.g., call center volume; pro bono lawyers; hours, etc.); use to evaluate progress.

- Explore options for conducting a legal needs study to assess and prioritize case work (study may also be used to demonstrate need to Legislature).

- Ensure that all signage in courts is translated into Spanish.

**Action Steps that May Emerge from Others; or Longer-Term Efforts**

- Continue ongoing review of delivery system (including non-LSC issues); make recommendation for change if necessary.

- Continue review of implementation of the call center and assist providers as necessary.

- Explore possibilities for increasing use of fellowships for and pro bono service from attorneys displaced by the current economic downturn.

- Explore options for pro bono service by government attorneys.

- Explore options for pro bono service by corporate counsel.

- Adapt existing interactive court forms to include instructions to make them usable by self-represented litigants.
• Develop systems for capturing data on self-represented litigants: volume and case types.

• Examine other statutory and procedural barriers to the justice system for self-represented litigants and make recommendations for change.

• Explore the development of processes for steering cases to appropriate types of service to maximize efficiency.

• Advocate for reduction in federal court filing fees.

V. Commission as a whole

Important Action Step

• Explore the role of the Commission, if any, in meeting the legal needs of people above the legal services eligibility level who are nevertheless unable to afford counsel.

Long-term Possibilities

• Develop a work plan for access to justice in Mississippi for people with limited English proficiency.

• Develop methodologies to evaluate the work of the Commission, possibly through an Evaluation Committee.