RECOMMENDATION

RESOLVED, That the American Bar Association reaffirms its commitment to the core values of the legal profession, including commitment to pro bono provision of legal services to those in need and the commitment to the independence of the profession, provided that this does not negate existing ABA policy regarding any governmental obligation to provide counsel.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the American Bar Association commends the courageous lawyers who meet their professional responsibility to provide pro bono legal services to disfavored individuals and groups, in selfless dedication to America’s commitment to the highest ideals of due process and equal access to justice and in support of the fundamental right to counsel for anyone threatened with deprivation of life or liberty, including those accused of the worst crimes, and against whom public enmity runs deepest.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the American Bar Association urges that public education efforts be strengthened by the ABA and state, specialty, local and territorial bars to explain that lawyers who volunteer in legal defense of disfavored individuals and groups are performing a vital role under our system of justice, and are worthy of public appreciation and support; and, that if legal assistance is withheld from anyone because of the nature of the accusations made against them, or the unpopularity of their beliefs, that all of us are at greater risk.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the American Bar Association condemns any governmental attack on the independence of the profession that encourages clients to exert improper influence over their lawyers’ choice of other clients, or to penalize lawyers for representing unpopular or controversial clients.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the American Bar Association urges all branches of the United States government, and all other governments within the United States and its territories, to ensure that any lawyers or other policymakers whom they employ refrain from any such governmental attack on the independence of the profession, and to effectively remedy any such attack.