



American Bar Association

Governmental Affairs Office

“What’s New in Washington” Entries from the 110th Congress

December 2008

ABA Supports the "Medical Device Safety Act"

On December 29, 2008 the ABA sent letters to the House and Senate urging support for legislation to allow injured patients to hold negligent medical device manufacturers liable for damages in state courts under state laws for product related deaths and injuries.

[Read the House letter](#)

[Read the Senate letter](#)

ABA Offers Policy Recommendations for the New Administration and the New Congress

The Governmental Affairs Office of the ABA has prepared five separate policy papers summarizing some of the Association's most significant recommendations for the new Administration and the new Congress.

[Read the policy papers](#)

ABA Provides Information on Payment for Medical Records for Social Security Claimants

The ABA recently reviewed the laws in effect in each state that govern the charges medical providers can impose for making copies of their records for Social Security Disability and SSI claimants. It reviewed extensive research done by the National Organization of Social Security Claimants Representatives and conducted additional research. It then decided to compile the attached chart based on that research. The chart describes the law in each state regarding the costs of obtaining medical records from medical providers. Also attached is a compilation of the laws referred to in the chart. The ABA shared this information with Social Security Administration Commissioner Astrue. The information in the chart can be helpful in obtaining copies of medical records because it alerts health care providers to the maximum amount that can be legally charged, or whether to provide copies at no charge. The chart should not be misconstrued

as applying to the cost of physicians' completing medical forms or writing narrative reports.

[View the chart](#)

[View the appendix of state laws](#)

November 2008

ABA Urges Congress before Adjourning to Repeal "Section 140"

On November 20, 2008, the ABA sent individualized letters to congressional leaders and to all members of the Senate, urging at a minimum to repeal "section 140" and enable judges to receive the 2009 cost-of-living adjustment.

[Read the sample Congressional Leadership letter](#)

[Read the Senate letter](#)

ABA Urges FDIC to Provide Full Insurance Protection for IOLTA Accounts

On November 13, 2008, the ABA submitted comments urging the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) to provide full insurance coverage on Interest on Lawyer Trust Accounts (IOLTA) under the new Temporary Liquidity Guarantee Program (TLGP), which provides full insurance coverage for non-interest bearing transactional accounts.

[Read the letter](#)

October 2008

ABA Urges FDIC for Full Insurance Coverage of IOLTA Accounts

On October 22, 2008, the ABA sent a letter to Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) Chairman Sheila Bair urging the FDIC to include Interest on Lawyer Trust Accounts (IOLTAs) in the new Temporary Liquidity Guarantee Program (TLGP), which provides unlimited insurance on non-interest bearing transactional accounts. The FDIC Interim Rule did not include IOLTA accounts. Public comments on the Interim Rule are due November 13. The ABA, state bar associations, specialty bar associations and individual lawyers are submitting comments.

[Read the letter](#)

ABA Comments on Draft Bill on Civil Service Reform Act Amendments

On October 2, 2008, the ABA sent a letter to the Social Security Administration, commenting on a preliminary draft of a bill to amend the Civil Service Reform Act as it relates to disciplinary actions against administrative law judges.

[Read the letter](#)

September 2008

ABA Comments on the Proposed Provider Conscience Regulation

On September 25, 2008, the ABA sent comments regarding Proposed Provider Conscience Regulation RIN 0991-AB48: “Ensuring that Department of Health and Human Services Funds Do Not Support Coercive or Discriminatory Policies or Practices in Violation of Federal Law.”

[See the comments](#)

ABA Supports Basic Pay and Locality Adjustments for Administrative Law Judges

On September 25, 2008, the ABA sent a letter to Howard Weizmann, Deputy Director of the U.S. Office of Personnel Management, urging the Office of Personnel Management and the President to exercise the authority granted to them to make basic pay adjustments for administrative law judges.

[Read the letter](#)

ABA Supports H.R. 7033, the Fairness & Accuracy in Employment Background Checks Act

On September 24, 2008, the ABA sent a letter to Rep. Bobby Scott expressing support for H.R. 7033, the Fairness & Accuracy in Employment Background Checks Act to improve the accuracy and reliability of criminal record information maintained by the FBI.

[Read the letter](#)

ABA Urges Floor Vote on H.R. 3174, the Equal Justice for United States Military Personnel Act of 2007.

On September 19, 2008, the ABA sent a letter to House leadership urging a floor consideration of H.R. 3174, the Equal Justice for United States Military Personnel Act of 2007.

[Read the House Leadership letter](#)

ABA Urges Floor Vote on S. 2052, the Equal Justice for United States Military Personnel Act of 2007.

On September 16, 2008, the ABA sent a letters to Senate leadership and to the Honorable Carl Levin, chair of the Senate Committee on Armed Services, urging a floor consideration of S. 2052, the Equal Justice for United States Military Personnel Act of 2007.

[Read the Senate Leadership letter](#)

[Read the Levin letter](#)

ABA Supports Compromise Mental Health and Addiction Parity Legislation

On September 19, 2008, the ABA sent a letter to all members of the House and Senate leadership supporting the compromise legislation on H.R. 1424 and S. 558 to bring parity to medical treatment for substance abuse and mental health disorders in comparison with other medically necessary care.

[Read the House letter](#)

[Read the Senate letter](#)

ABA Supports H.R. 6893, the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008

On September 16, 2008, the ABA sent a letter to House and Senate leadership supporting H.R. 6893, the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act to improve the child welfare system and promote critically important connections to services, family, health care, and education for children in foster care.

[Read the House letter](#)

[Read the Senate letter](#)

August 2008

ABA Comments in Response to the U.S. Dept of Education's Proposed Rulemaking to Implement Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program Under P.L. 110-84, the College Cost Reduction and Access Act

On August 15, 2008, the ABA sent a letter to the U.S. Dept. of Education on proposed regulations to implement public service loan forgiveness under P.L. 110-84, the College Cost Reduction and Access Act.

[Read the letter](#)

July 2008

ABA Supports the Adoption of the Conference Report to H.R. 4137

On July 30, 2008, the ABA sent a letter to the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor & Pensions, in support for programs in the Higher Education Act reauthorization and for prompt passage of the Conference Report.

[Read the letter](#)

ABA Urges a Vote for Cloture on S. 2035, the Free Flow of Information Act of 2007

On July 29, 2008, the ABA sent a letter to the Senate urging a vote for cloture on a motion to proceed to consideration of S. 2035, the Free Flow of Information Act of 2007.

[Read the letter](#)

ABA Supports the Introduction of the Meehan Act

On July 29, 2008, the ABA sent a letter to Rep. Zoe Lofgren and Rep. Dan Lungren expressing ABA support for the introduction of the Charles H. W. Meehan Law Library Improvement and Modernization Act.

[Read the letter](#)

ABA Supports H.R. 6307, to Improve the Child Welfare System

On July 25, 2008, the ABA sent a letter to the Senate Finance Committee supporting H.R. 6307, the Fostering Connections to Success Act to improve the child welfare system and promote critically important connections to services, family, health care and education for children in foster care.

[Read the letter](#)

ABA Urges Support for H.R. 840

On July 18, 2008, the ABA sent a letter to the House Committee on Financial Services, in support for harmonizing the definitions of "homeless" under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act to include those living in campgrounds, motels or doubled-up in other's homes.

[Read the letter](#)

ABA Urges a Vote Against an Amendment to S. 2731 Striking a Ban on HIV-Positive Visitors to the United States

On July 15, 2008, the ABA sent a letter to the U.S. Senate urging a vote against an amendment sponsored by Senator Jeff Sessions to strike a provision in S. 2731 that would repeal a ban on HIV-positive visitors to the United States.

[Read the letter](#)

ABA Supports Legislation to Update and Improve the Federal Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act

On July 14, 2008, the ABA sent a letter to the Senate Judiciary Committee supporting S. 3155, the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Reauthorization Act of 2008 and urging that the bill be amended to provide for a phase-out of the statutory authority to confine youth status offenders in juvenile facilities.

[Read the letter](#)

ABA Recommends the Creation of a Bipartisan Independent Commission to Address Disaster Preparedness

On July 10, 2008, the ABA sent letters to the House Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure and the Senate Committee on Homeland Security & Governmental Affairs, recommending the creation of a bipartisan independent commission to address the challenges of disaster response and preparedness.

[Read the House letter](#)

[Read the Senate letter](#)

ABA Supports Legislation to Address Racial and Ethnic Disparities in the Criminal Justice System

On July 10, 2008, the ABA sent a letter to Senator Joseph Biden supporting the Justice Integrity Act to examine the cause and extent of racial and ethnic disparities in the criminal justice system and to facilitate the development of proposals for reducing or eliminating racial and ethnic bias where it is found.

[Read the letter](#)

June 2008

ABA Comments on Proposed FAR Rule on "Contractor Compliance Program and Integrity Reporting"

On June 20, 2008, the ABA sent a letter to the General Services Administration, commenting on the proposed FAR rule on "Contractor Compliance Program and Integrity

Reporting," urging additional language that would better protect companies' attorney-client privilege, work product, and employee legal rights.

[Read the letter](#)

ABA President Urges Senate Subcommittee to Increase Funding for the Legal Services Corporation

On June 17, 2008, the ABA sent a letter to the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies, urging an increase of funding for the Legal Services Corporation.

[Read the letter](#)

ABA Supports Sufficient Funding of SSA

On June 16, 2008, the ABA sent a letter to the House and Senate Appropriations Subcommittees on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies asking them to provide no less than \$240 million above the President's Budget Request for the Social Security Administration's administrative expenses in the FY 2009 Appropriations bill.

[Read the House letter](#)

[Read the Senate Letter](#)

ABA Supports H.R. 5876

On June 16, 2008, the ABA sent a letter to the House of Representatives urging members to vote in favor of H.R. 5876, the Stop Child Abuse in Residential Programs for Teens Act.

[Read the letter](#)

ABA President Urges House Subcommittee to Increase Funding for the Legal Services Corporation

On June 11, 2008, the ABA sent a letter to the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies, urging an increase of funding for the Legal Services Corporation.

[Read the letter](#)

ABA Supports Continued Funding of the National Institute of Corrections (NIC) in FY 2009

On June 10, 2008, the ABA sent a letter to the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies to express strong support for continued funding of the National Institute of Corrections (NIC) in FY 2009 at \$22 million, consistent with this year's funding.

[Read the letter](#)

ABA Urges Actions to Address Deficiencies in the Provision of Medical Care to Immigration Detainees

On June 4, 2008, the ABA submitted a written statement to the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Immigration, Citizenship, Refugees, Border Security and International Law for its hearing on "Problems with Immigration Detainee Medical Care."

[Read the statement](#)

May 2008

ABA Testifies on "Closing the Justice Gap: Providing Civil Legal Assistance to Low-Income American"

On May 22, 2008, the Honorable Lora Livingston testified on behalf of the ABA before the U.S. Senate Committee on Judiciary at the hearing on "Closing the Justice Gap: Providing Civil Legal Assistance to Low-Income American." The ABA also submitted additional information to the Senate Judiciary hearing record.

[Read the statement](#)

[Read additional material](#)

ABA Supports Reinstatement of Section 120, Group Legal Services

On May 15, 2008, the ABA sent a letter to Representative Charles B. Rangel, Chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, in support of the reinstatement of Section 120 group legal services benefits.

[Read the letter](#)

ABA Testifies on Funding and Special Issues Confronting the Law Library of Congress

On May 07, 2008, the Honorable Bill Orton testified on behalf of the ABA before the U.S. House Appropriations Subcommittee on the Legislative Branch in support of funding and special issues confronting the Law Library of Congress.

[Read the statement](#)

ABA Comments on the Social Security Administration's Disability Backlog

On May 1, 2008, the ABA submitted comments to the record of the April 23, 2008 House Ways and Means Committee hearing titled 'Clearing the Disability Backlog- Giving the Social Security Administration the Resources It Needs to Provide the Benefits Workers Have Earned'.

[Read the letter](#)

April 2008

ABA Supports Increased IRS Funding for FY 2009

On April 29, 2008, the ABA Section of Taxation sent letters to the House and Senate Appropriations Subcommittees on Financial Services and General Government expressing the Association's support for increased funding for the Internal Revenue Service in FY 2009.

[Read the Senate letter](#)

[Read the House letter](#)

ABA Supports S. 2767, a Bill to Provide for Judicial Discretion Regarding Suspensions of Student Eligibility under HEA

On April 24, 2008, the ABA sent a letter to the Senate Committee on Health and Education Labor, and Pensions and the House Committee on Education and Labor supporting S. 2767, a bill to provide for judicial discretion regarding suspensions of student eligibility under section 484(r) of the Higher Education Act of 1965.

[Read the letter](#)

ABA Supports S.1843, the Fair Pay Restoration Act

On April 22, 2008 to the Senate supporting S.1843, the Fair Pay Restoration Act, legislation addressing the imbalance in civil rights jurisprudence brought on by the 2007 Supreme Court ruling in Ledbetter v. Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co., 127 S.Ct. 2162 (2007).

[Read the letter](#)

ABA Comments on Proposed Revisions to the Code of Conduct for United States Judges

On April 18, 2008, the ABA sent comments to Honorable Gordon J. Quist, Chairman U.S. Judicial Conference of the United States Committee on Codes of Conduct regarding proposed revisions to the Code of Conduct for United States Judges.

[Read the letter](#)

ABA Supports H.R. 1783, the Elder Justice Act

On April 17, 2008, the ABA submitted a written statement to the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism and Homeland Security for the hearing record on H.R. 1783, supporting the Elder Justice Act.

[Read the statement](#)

ABA Urges Senate and House Leadership to Provide Substantial and Long-Overdue Pay Raises for Federal Judges

On April 10, 2008, the ABA sent letters to House and Senate leadership urging them to pass legislation this session to provide our federal judges with a substantial and long-overdue pay raise.

[Read the letter](#)

ABA Supports Trade Promotion Authority in Columbia Trade Agreement

On April 10, 2008, the ABA sent a letter encouraging the House of Representatives to adhere to the Trade Promotion Authority-eligible status of the submitted implementing bill for the U.S.-Columbia Trade Promotion Agreement.

[Read the letter](#)

ABA Testifies on Competency of Defense Counsel in Capital Cases

On April 8, 2008, Michael S. Greco, former ABA President, testified before the Senate Judiciary Subcommittee on the Constitution in regard to the competency of defense counsel in capital cases and how that impacts the administration of the death penalty.

[Read the statement](#)

ABA Supports S. 2533, the State Secrets Protection Act

On April 2, 2008, the ABA sent a letter to members of the Senate Judiciary Committee expressing strong support for S. 2533, the State Secrets Protection Act.

[Read the letter](#)

ABA Supports Establishing National Health Care Decisions Day

On April 2, 2008, the ABA sent a letter to Senator Ron Wyden (D-OR), commending him for introducing S.J.Res. 29, a joint resolution establishing National Health Care Decisions Day.

[Read the letter](#)

ABA Supports Increased Juvenile Justice Funding in FY 2009

On April 2, 2008, the ABA sent a letter to both the House and Senate Appropriations Subcommittees on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies encouraging them to increase the FY 2009 juvenile justice funding levels.

[Read the Senate letter](#)

[Read the House letter](#)

March 2008

ABA Supports S. 2450, Legislation to Adopt Proposed Federal Rule of Evidence 502

On March 21, 2008, the ABA Governmental Affairs Office and the ABA Section of Litigation sent two separate letters to all members of the House Judiciary Committee endorsing S. 2450, legislation to adopt proposed Federal Rule of Evidence 502 dealing with the attorney-client privilege and the work product doctrine, and urging them to support prompt House passage of the measure as soon as possible without amendment.

[Read the GAO letter](#)

[Read the Section of Litigation letter](#)

ABA President Nuekom Respond to President Musharraf

On March 20, 2008, ABA President William Nuekom sent a letter to the President Prevez Musharraf of Pakistan in response to the invitation by President Musharraf for the ABA to reconsider its views on the rule of law in Pakistan. In the response, ABA President Nuekom urged President Musharraf to restore the Constitution as it stood before the November 3 state of emergency, to reinstate all judges dismissed during the state of emergency, and to release all judges and lawyers detained in connection with the state of emergency.

[Read the letter](#)

ABA Supports H.R. 1424, the Paul Wellstone Mental Health and Addiction Equity Act of 2007

On March 5, 2008, the ABA sent a letter House in support of H.R. 1424, the Paul Wellstone Mental Health and Addiction Equity Act of 2007.

[Read the letter](#)

February 2008

ABA Comments on a Revision of an AECA Regulation

On February 27, 2008, ABA President William H. Neukom sent a letter to the State Department commenting on the recently revised requirement in the AECA that certain persons involved in brokering defense trade transactions register with the State Department.

[Read the letter](#)

ABA Leader Urges Fair Trial Procedures for Guantanamo Detainees

On February 27, 2008, ABA President William H. Neukom sent a letter to President George W. Bush expressing concern that the military commission system at Guantanamo does not adhere to established principles of due process and offering to "engage the most able legal minds to ensure that these cases comport with the rule of law, so precious to our democracy."

[Read the letter](#)

ABA Supports Uniform Interrogation Standards

On February 13, 2008, the ABA sent a letter to all members of the Senate - as it was preparing to consider the conference report for H.R. 2082, the FY 2008 Intelligence Authorization legislation - to voice its support for the inclusion of language that would establish uniform interrogation standards for detainees in U.S. custody.

[Read the letter](#)

ABA Comments on the State Secrets Privilege and Voices its Support for the State Secrets Protection Act, S. 2533

On February 13, 2008, the ABA submitted a written statement to the Senate Judiciary Committee for the hearing on "Examining the State Secrets Privilege: Protecting National Security While Preserving Accountability."

[Read the statement](#)

ABA Supports S. 1711, The Drug Sentencing Reform and Cocaine Kingpin Trafficking Act of 2007

On February 12, 2008, the ABA sent a letter to all members of the Senate urging them to support S. 1711, the Drug Sentencing Reform and Cocaine Kingpin Trafficking Act of 2007. S. 1711 is the Senate counterpart to H.R. 4545 and would end the disparate treatment of crack versus cocaine offenses.

[Read the letter](#)

ABA Supports H.R. 4545, The Drug Sentencing Reform and Cocaine Kingpin Trafficking Act of 2007

On February 12, 2008, the ABA sent a letter to all members of the House of Representatives urging them to support H.R. 4545, The Drug Sentencing Reform and Cocaine Kingpin Trafficking Act of 2007. H.R. 4545 is the House counterpart to S.1711 and would end the disparate treatment of crack versus cocaine offenses.

[Read the letter](#)

ABA Testifies on Federal Cocaine Sentencing Laws

On February 12, 2008, James Felman testified on behalf of the ABA before the Senate Judiciary Subcommittee on Crime and Drugs in the hearing on 'Federal Cocaine Sentencing Laws: Reforming the 100-to-1 Crack/Powder Disparity.'

[Read the statement](#)

ABA Supports S. 2523, the National Affordable Housing Trust Fund Act of 2007

On February 7, 2008, the ABA sent a letter to Senator John Kerry commending his recent introduction of S. 2523, the National Affordable Housing Trust Fund Act of 2007.

[Read the letter](#)

ABA Supports the Passage of S.A. 3910, an Amendment Reiterating FISA Exclusivity

On February 4, 2008, the ABA sent a letter to all members of the Senate urging passage of the Feinstein Amendment, S.A. 3910, to reiterate FISA exclusivity.

[Read the letter](#)

January 2008

ABA Urges Swift Approval of S. 1638, the Federal Judicial Salary Restoration Act of 2007

On January 30, 2008, the ABA sent a letter to the Senate Judiciary Committee urging support for S. 1638, the Federal Judicial Salary Restoration Act of 2007.

[Read the letter](#)

ABA Comments on the Need to Address Older Voters

On January 31, 2008, the ABA submitted a written statement to the Senate Special Committee on Aging commenting on the need to address opportunities and challenges specific to older voters.

[Read the statement](#)

ABA Comments on the Oversight of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990

On January 29, 2008, the ABA sent a letter to the House Committee on Education and Labor regarding the oversight of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

[Read the letter](#)

ABA Testifies on Reform of the State Secrets Privilege

On January 29, 2008, President-elect H. Thomas Wells testified before the House Judiciary Subcommittee on the Constitution, Civil Rights and Civil Liberties for the "Oversight Hearing on Reform of the State Secrets Privilege."

[Read the statement](#)

ABA Supports H.R. 840, a Bill to Amend the McKinney-Vento Homelessness Assistance Act

On January 25, 2008, the ABA sent a letter to the House Financial Services Subcommittee on Housing and Community Opportunity urging support for H.R. 840, a bill to amend the McKinney-Vento Homelessness Assistance Act.

[Read the letter](#)

ABA Washington Letter Annual Legislative Chart Now Online

ABA Washington Letter Annual Legislative Chart Now Online The January 2008 edition of the ABA Washington Letter is the annual "Major Legislation of Interest to Lawyers," a chart highlighting action on ABA legislative policy issues during the First Session of the 110th Congress. The 32-page chart contains more than 100 issues, details the status of legislation and the ABA policy positions, designates the association's legislative priorities, and notes whether the association submitted policy statements in the form of policy letters or testimony.

[View the Annual Legislative Chart](#)

ABA Comments on the Fair Pay Restoration Act

On January 24, 2008, the ABA submitted a written statement to the Senate Committee on the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions for the hearing on "The Fair Pay Restoration Act: Ensuring Reasonable Rules in Pay Discrimination Cases."

[Read the statement](#)

ABA Supports the Passage of S.1200, the Indian Health Care Improvement Act Amendments of 2007

On January 24, 2008, the ABA sent a letter to the Senate urging support of S.1200, the Indian Health Care Improvement Act Amendments of 2007.

[Read the letter](#)

ABA Supports the Youth PROMISE Act

On January 15, 2008, the ABA sent a letter to the U.S. House of Representatives urging members to support and cosponsor H.R. 3846, the Youth PROMISE Act, to reduce youth violence.

[Read the letter](#)

December 2007

ABA Comments on Proposed Social Security Administration Rulemaking Amendments

On December 27, 2007, the ABA sent a letter to the SSA which identified concerns with the proposed rulemaking amendments to the Administrative Law Judge, Appeals Council, and Decision Review Board of Appeals levels.

[Read the comments](#)

ABA Testifies on H.R. 40, a Bill to Create a Commission to Study Those Effects of Slavery Evident Into The Present Day

On December 18, 2007, President-elect H. Thomas Wells testified on behalf of the ABA before the House Judiciary Subcommittee on the Constitution, Civil Rights and Civil Liberties on the utility of a commission to study the social, economic and political effects

of past enslavement and state supported discrimination upon African-Americans within the United States.

[Read the statement](#)

ABA Supports Legislation to Adopt Proposed Federal Rule of Evidence 502

On December 7, 2007, the ABA sent a letter the Senate Committee on the Judiciary expressing strong support for legislation to adopt proposed Federal Rule of Evidence 502.

[Read the letter](#)

November 2007

ABA Supports amending Section 363(f) of the Federal Bankruptcy Code

On November 15, 2007, the ABA sent a letter to the House and Senate Judiciary Committees supporting amending Section 363(f) of the Federal Bankruptcy Code regarding certain sales of real property.

[Read the letter](#)

ABA Supports the Passage of the American Anti-Torture Act

On November 14, 2007, the ABA sent a letter the House of Representatives supporting the inclusion of language in H.R. 4156, the FY 2008 War Supplemental Appropriations Act, to establish uniform interrogation standards for detainees in U.S. custody.

[Read the letter](#)

ABA Supports Immediate Pay Increase for Federal Judges

On November 14, 2007, the ABA sent a letter Senate Committee on the Judiciary urging support for S. 1638, bipartisan legislation that will provide an immediate pay increase for federal judges.

[Read the letter](#)

ABA Testifies on Retroactive Application of USSC Amendment 9

On November 13, 2007, Barry Boss testified on behalf of the ABA urging the United States Sentencing Commission to give retroactive effect to its amendment changing federal sentence guidelines for crack cocaine offenses.

[Read the statement](#)

ABA Supports Retroactive Application of USSC Amendment 9

On November 12, 2007, ABA sent a letter to the United States Sentencing Commission supporting retroactive application of USSC Amendment 9 pertaining to the sentencing of offenses involving crack cocaine.

[Read the letter](#)

ABA Supports the Second Chance Act of 2007

On November 9, 2007, ABA sent a letter to the U.S. House of Representatives supporting the passage of H.R. 1593, The Second Chance Act of 2007.

[Read the letter](#)

ABA Supports the Attorney-Client Privilege Protection Act of 2007

On November 8, 2007, ABA sent a letter to Congress supporting the passage of the Attorney-Client Privilege Protection Act of 2007, HR 3013.

[Read the letter](#)

ABA Testifies on the Prison Litigation Reform Act

On November 8, 2007, Margo Schlanger testified on behalf of the ABA urging immediate amendment of the Prison Litigation Reform Act.

[Read the statement](#)

ABA Expresses Concern at the Indefinite State of Emergency Declared in Pakistan

On November 6, 2007, ABA President William Nuekom sent a letter to the President Prevez Musharraf of Pakistan expressing grave concern at the indefinite state of emergency declared in Pakistan on November 3, particularly as it relates to the suspension of the constitution, dismissal of Chief Justice Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry, and detention of lawyers and human rights advocates.

[Read the letter](#)

ABA Supports the Passage of Employment Non-Discrimination Act of 2007

November 6, 2007, ABA sent a letter to Congress supporting the passage Employment Non-Discrimination Act of 2007, HR 3685.

[Read the letter](#)

ABA Supports an Immediate Pay Increase for Federal Judges

November 2, 2007, ABA sent a letter to Senator Patrick J. Leahy, Chair of Senate Committee on the Judiciary, urging the support for S. 1638, bipartisan legislation that will provide an immediate pay increase for federal judges.

[Read the letter](#)

ABA Supports an Immediate Pay Increase for Federal Judges

November 1, 2007, ABA sent a letter to Representative John Conyers, Jr., Chair of House Committee on the Judiciary, urging the support for H.R. 3753, bipartisan legislation that will provide an immediate pay increase for federal judges.

[Read the letter](#)

ABA Testifies on Children's Ombudsman Program in Pennsylvania

On November 1, 2007, Anne Marie Lancour testified on behalf of the ABA supporting PA HB 1709, to create a Children's Ombudsman Program in Pennsylvania.

[Read the statement](#)

October 2007

ABA Supports S. 1711 to Eliminate the Crack-Cocaine Sentencing Disparity

On October 30, 2007, ABA President William H. Neukom sent a letter to Senator Biden supporting legislation (S. 1711) he recently sponsored to eliminate the current disparity in federal sentences for crack versus powder cocaine offenses.

[Read the letter](#)

ABA Supports Limited Public Access to Plea Agreements

On October 25, 2007, the ABA submitted a letter to the Administrative Office of US Courts urging them to continue to allow public access to plea agreements with certain limitations to protect against illegal misuse of the documents.

[Read the comments](#)

ABA Testifies on the Current Issues with Library Management at the Library of Congress

On October 24, 2007, Tedson J. Meyers testified on behalf of the ABA before the House Committee on House Administration on the subject of "The Library of Congress: Current Issues with Library Management."

[Read the statement](#)

The ABA Supports H.R. 505, the Native Hawaiian Government Reorganization Act of 2007

On October 23, 2007, The ABA sent a letter to the Members of House of Representatives urging them to support for the Native Hawaiian Government Reorganization Act.

[Read the letter](#)

ABA Supports the Development, Relief and Education for Alien Minors Act of 2007 (DREAM Act)

On October 23, 2007, the ABA sent a letter to members of the Senate urging them to vote in favor of cloture for and final passage of S. 2205, the DREAM Act.

[Read the letter](#)

ABA Supports the Juvenile Crime Reduction Act of 2007

On October 17, 2007, ABA sent a letter to Representative Patrick Kennedy commending his introduction of the Juvenile Crime Reduction Act of 2007 addressing problems due to the prevalence of young people with mental health disorders that come into contact with the juvenile justice system.

[Read the letter](#)

ABA Supports the Retention of the Gender Identity and Gender Expression Protections Contained in the H.R. 2015, Employment Non Discrimination Act Of 2007

On October 16, 2007, The ABA sent a letter to the House Committee on Education and Labor in support of retaining the gender identity and gender expression protections contained in the H.R. 2015, Employment Non Discrimination Act of 2007.

[Read the letter](#)

ABA Opposes the Thune Amendment to the Commerce, Justice, Science Appropriations Bill

On October 16, 2007, the ABA sent a letter to the Senate opposing the Thune Amendment to the Commerce, Justice, Science appropriations bill. The amendment that

would significantly reduce the amount of FY 2008 funding for the Legal Services Corporation.

[Read the letter](#)

ABA Supports the Reauthorization of the Terrorism Risk Insurance Act

On October 16, 2007, ABA sent a letter to the Senate Committee on Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs supporting the reauthorization of the Terrorism Risk Insurance Act for a term of years that is as long as possible so as to stabilize the price of terrorism insurance by reducing the amount of risk borne by insurers.

[Read the letter](#)

ABA Comments on Draft Rules Governing Judicial Conduct and Disability Proceedings

On October 15, 2007, ABA sent comments to the Judicial Conference of the United States Committee on Judicial Conduct and Disability regarding draft rules governing judicial conduct and disability proceedings undertaken pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §§ 351-364.

[Read the comments](#)

ABA Supports Appropriate Safeguards to Ensure that Amendments to FISA are Constitutionally Sound

On October 12, 2007, ABA sent a letter to the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence urging it to establish an effective and constitutionally sound legal framework to meet surveillance needs and ensure that national security objectives are being accomplished.

[Read the letter](#)

ABA Supports the Elimination of the Cocaine Sentencing Disparity

On October 3, 2007, ABA sent a letter to the Senate and House Judiciary Committee supporting the United States Sentencing Commission (USSC) latest recommendations and to urge the Committees to enact legislation that implement the recommendations, including elimination of the federal sentencing disparity between crack and powder offenses.

[Read the letter](#)

September 2007

ABA Supports U.S. Accession to Convention on the Law of the Sea

On September 27, 2007 ABA President William H. Neukom submitted a written statement to the Senate Committee Foreign Relations in support of the United States becoming a party to the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea. The Law of the Sea Convention establishes a universal legal framework for the use of the world's oceans and joining the treaty will help protect and enhance U.S. economic, environmental and national security interests.

[Read the statement](#)

ABA Supports the Reauthorization and the Funding of Administrative Conference of the United States

On September 19, 2007, the ABA sent a written statement to House Judiciary Subcommittee on Commercial and Administrative Law regarding the hearing titled "H.R. 3564, the Regulatory Improvement Act of 2007."

[Read the statement](#)

ABA Supports in Principle S. 1267, the Free Flow of Information Act of 2007

On September 19, 2007, the ABA sent a letter to Senator Leahy, Chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee to address the need for a federal reporters' shield law and to express support in principle for S. 1267, the Free Flow of Information Act of 2007.

[Read the letter](#)

ABA Supports H.R. 2761, Reauthorization of the Terrorism Risk Insurance Act

On September 18, 2007, the ABA sent a letter to the House in support of H.R. 2761, legislation that would reauthorize, for fifteen years, the Terrorism Risk Insurance Act.

[Read the letter](#)

ABA Supports S.A. 2022, the Specter-Leahy Amendment Restoring Habeas

On September 18, 2007, the ABA sent a letter to Senate in support S.A. 2022, the Specter-Leahy Amendment, to restore habeas corpus for "enemy combatants" in U.S. custody.

[Read the letter](#)

ABA Comments on "Alternative Sentencing and Offender Reentry"

On September 18, 2007, Margaret Colgate Love testified on behalf of the ABA before the Joint Committee on the Judiciary of the Massachusetts General Court on the subject of "Alternative Sentencing and Offender Reentry."

[Read the statement](#)

ABA Supports S. 1257, the District of Columbia House Voting Rights Act of 2007

On September 17, 2007, the ABA sent a letter to Senate in support of S. 1257, the District of Columbia House Voting Rights Act of 2007, would establish the District of Columbia as a Congressional district for purposes of representation in the House of Representatives.

[Read the letter](#)

August 2007

ABA Comments on OJP Programs Docket 1464, Relating to Defense Counsels in Death Penalty Cases

On August 25, 2007, the ABA sent a letter to the Office of Justice Programs commenting on OJP docket 1464, expressing concern regarding the availability and quality of defense counsels in death penalty cases.

[Read the comments](#)

ABA Suggests research topic for USSC's 2008 Priorities

On August 22, 2007, the ABA proposed that the effectiveness of alternatives to incarceration in the prevention of recidivism be a research topic included in the USSC's 2008 Priorities.

[Read the comments](#)

ABA Strongly Supports the Reauthorized Administrative Conference of the United States for Fiscal Year 2008

On August 1, 2007, the ABA sent a letter to the House and Senate Committee on Appropriations expressing its strong support for funding the Administrative Conference of the United States for Fiscal Year 2008

[Read the letter](#)

July 2007

ABA Comments on the Status of Pay and Benefits for Non-Article III Judges

On July 30, 2007, the ABA submitted a written statement to the House Government Reform Subcommittee on Federal Workforce, Postal Service, and District of Columbia on the subject of "Oversight Hearing on Federal Employee Pay."

[Read the statement](#)

ABA Supports H.R. 2826, Restoring Habeas Corpus Jurisdiction to the Federal Courts

On July 25, 2007 the ABA sent a letter to Committee on Armed Services Chairman Ike Skelton in support of H.R. 2826. In addition to restoring habeas corpus jurisdiction to the federal courts, this bill would also fix provisions in the Military Commissions Act.

[Read the letter](#)

ABA Supports S. 1257, the District of Columbia House Voting Rights Act of 2007

On July 24, 2007, the ABA sent a letter to all the members of the Senate in support of S. 1257, the District of Columbia House Voting Rights Act of 2007. S. 1257 would establish the District of Columbia as a congressional district for purposes of representation in the House of Representatives.

[Read the letter](#)

ABA Supports S. 1060, the Second Chance Act of 2007

On July 23, 2007, the ABA sent a letter to the Senate in support of S. 1060, the Second Chance Act of 2007. The enactment of S. 1060 will help former prisoners successfully reenter our communities and thereby reduce recidivism.

[Read the letter](#)

ABA Opposes Mandatory Minimum Sentencing Laws

On July 3, 2007, the ABA sent a letter to the Judiciary Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, and Homeland Security opposing mandatory minimum sentencing laws and urging Congress to repeal them.

[Read the letter](#)

June 2007

ABA Supports Amendment of the Federal Definition of Homelessness

On June 25, 2007, the ABA sent a letter to the House Financial Services Subcommittee on Housing and Community Opportunity urging the amendment of the federal definition of homelessness to include those sharing the housing of others, or living in a motel, hotel, camping ground or emergency or transitional shelter.

[Read the letter](#)

ABA Urges Senate Subcommittee to Increase Legal Services Corporation Funding

On June 22, 2007, the ABA wrote the leaders of a House Appropriations Subcommittee to request a significant funding increase for the Legal Services Corporation, noting that more than 50 Senators recently signed a bipartisan letter supporting increased funding.

[Read the letter](#)

ABA Supports H.R. 2102, the Free Flow of Information Act of 2007

On June 13, 2007, ABA sent a letter to the Honorable John Conyers, Chair of the House Judiciary Committee, supporting in principle H.R. 2102, the Free Flow of Information Act of 2007.

[Read the letter](#)

ABA Supports Several Provisions of the Higher Education Act

On June 7, 2007, the ABA sent a letter to the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions in support of several provisions of the Higher Education Act. These provisions include: loan repayment assistance for long-term public servants, access to financial aid despite past drug offenses and reauthorization of the Thurgood Marshal Legal Education Opportunity Program.

[Read the letter](#)

ABA Urges House Subcommittee to Increase Legal Services Corporation Funding

On June 7, 2007, the ABA wrote the leaders of a House Appropriations Subcommittee to request a significant funding increase for the Legal Services Corporation, noting that more than 160 House Members recently signed a bipartisan letter supporting increased funding.

[Read the letter](#)

ABA Supports S. 185, the Habeas Corpus Restoration Act

On June 6, 2007, the ABA sent a letter to the Senate Judiciary Committee in support of S. 185, the "Habeas Corpus Restoration Act" and urging Congress to act now to ensure a fair process and to restore our international credibility.

[Read the letter](#)

ABA Urges Appropriations Subcommittee to Allow DC to Support Needle Exchange as a HIV Prevention Measure

On June 5, 2007, the ABA sent a letter to the House Appropriations Subcommittee urging that the Congressional restriction preventing the funds of the District of Columbia to be used to address HIV/AIDS epidemic through needle exchange programs be removed.

[Read the letter](#)

ABA Supports S. 186, the "Attorney-Client Privilege Protection Act of 2007"

On June 4, 2007, the ABA sent a letter to the Senate Judiciary Committee urging them to support S. 186, the "Attorney-Client Privilege Protection Act of 2007." S. 186 would overturn Department of Justice and other federal agency policies that erode the attorney-client privilege, the work product doctrine, and employees' constitutional and other legal rights in connection with government investigations of companies and other organizations.

[Read the letter](#)

May 2007

ABA Supports S. 515, the National Domestic Violence Volunteer Attorney Network Act

On May 25, 2007, the ABA sent a letter to Senators Joseph Biden and Arlen Specter expressing its appreciation for introduction of S.1515, the "National Domestic Violence Volunteer Attorney Network Act"; and the ABA urges Congress to enact this important legislation.

[Read the letter](#)

ABA Opposes Broad Federal Product Liability Legislation and Legislation Limiting Seller Liability

On May 24, 2007, the ABA sent a written statement to the House Committee on Small Business in opposition to broad federal seller liability legislation as well as legislation limiting seller liability.

[Read the statement](#)

ABA Urges Comprehensive Immigration Reform Legislation that will Provide Essential Changes to the U.S. Immigration System

On May 15, 2007, the ABA sent a letter to the United States Senate urging the passage of a comprehensive bill that includes a fair and practical program to address our nation's need for immigrant labor as well as the undocumented population currently living and working in the United States, ensures family unity, promotes national security, and provides crucial due process safeguards for immigrants and asylum seekers.

[Read the letter](#)

ABA Supports H.R. 555, The Family Telephone Connection Protection Act

On May 9, 2007, the ABA sent a letter to Representative Bobby Rush commending his introduction of H.R. 555, The Family Telephone Connection Protection Act. H.R. 555 would amend the Communications Act of 1934 to require the Federal Communications Commission to prescribe rules regulating inmate telephone service rates.

[Read the letter](#)

ABA Urges the Exclusion of the Tiarhrt Amendments from the FY 2008 DOJ Appropriations Bill

On May 7, 2007, the ABA sent a letter to the House and Senate Appropriations Subcommittees on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies urging the exclusion of the Tiarhrt Amendments from the FY 2008 Department of Justice Appropriations bill. The Tiarhrt Amendment hamstring the ability of federal, state and local law enforcement to investigate many types of gun crimes.

[Read House the letter](#)

[Read Senate the letter](#)

ABA Makes Recommendations to the Federal Highway Administration on their Model PPP Legislation

On May 2, 2007, the ABA sent a letter to the Secretary of Transportation, Federal Highways Administrator, Assistant Secretary for Transportation Policy (Office of the Secretary), and the Program Manager for Public-Private Partnerships (FHWA) making

recommendations on the Model PPP Legislation posted on the Federal Highway Administration for review and comment.

[Read the comments](#)

ABA Seeks Repeal of Harmful New Bankruptcy Abuse Prevention and Consumer Protection Act

On May 1, 2007, the ABA sent a letter to the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Commercial and Administrative Law urging the Subcommittee to support legislation to repeal the three harmful provisions in BAPCPA that dramatically increase the liability and administrative burdens of bankruptcy attorneys while denying effective legal representation to many Americans.

[Read the letter](#)

ABA Opposes Excessive Inmate Phone Service Rates

On May 1, 2007, the ABA sent a letter to the Federal Communications Commission opposing excessive inmate phone service rates, which inhibit communication between prisoners and the outside world, including legal counsel and family members.

[Read the letter](#)

April 2007

ABA Opposes Proposed Interim Regulations that would Apply SORNA Retroactively to Juvenile Offenders

On April 30, 2007, the ABA sent a letter to the Office of Legal Policy in opposition of interim regulations to the Adam Walsh Child Protection Act of 2006. These regulations would retroactively apply Sex Offender Registration and Notification Act (SORNA) standards to juvenile offenders.

[Read the letter](#)

ABA Supports the Alleviation of the Wide Disparity between Cocaine Powder and Crack Sentencing Guidelines

On April 24, 2007, the ABA sent a letter to the U.S. Sentencing Commission urging action to alleviate the glaring disparity between the cocaine powder and crack sentencing guidelines.

[Read the letter](#)

ABA Supports Permanent or Long-Term Reauthorization of Terrorism Risk Insurance Act

On April 24, 2007, the ABA submitted a written statement to the House Financial Services Subcommittee on Capital Markets, Insurance and Government Sponsored Enterprises in support of the permanent or long-term reauthorization of the Terrorism Risk Insurance Act. TRIA was created to help stabilize the commercial property and casualty insurance markets and ensure the continued availability of terrorism insurance for U.S. businesses.

[Read the statement](#)

ABA Supports the John R. Justice Prosecutor and Defender Incentive Act of 2007

On April 24, 2007, the ABA sent a letter to the House Committee on the Judiciary in support of the John R. Justice Prosecutor and Defender Incentive Act of 2007. The bill would provide law student loan repayment assistance to state and local prosecutors and federal, state and local public defenders.

[Read the letter](#)

ABA Urges Congress to Enact Judicial Pay Raise

On April 19, 2007, ABA submitted a written statement to the House Judiciary Subcommittee on the Courts, the Internet and Intellectual Property urging Congress to enact legislation to provide for an immediate and substantial pay raise for the federal judiciary.

[Read the statement](#)

ABA Supports H.R. 1905, the District of Columbia House Voting Rights Act of 2007

On April 18, 2007, the ABA sent a letter to the U.S. House of Representative in support of H.R. 1905, the District of Columbia House Voting Rights Act of 2007. H.R. 1905 would establish the District of Columbia as a congressional district for purposes of representation in the House of Representatives.

[Read the letter](#)

ABA Supports Security Through Regularized Immigration and a Vibrant Economy Act of 2007 (STRIVE Act)

On April 17, 2007, the ABA sent a letter to Representative Luis Gutierrez expressing its views on selected provisions of H.R. 1645, the STRIVE Act. This legislation includes a fair and practical program to address the nation's need for immigrant labor as well as the undocumented population currently living and working in the United States.

[Read the letter](#)

ABA Addresses the Subject of Domestic Violence and the Workplace

On April 17, 2007, the ABA submitted a written statement to the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pension Subcommittee on Employment Workplace Safety to address the important issue of the impact of domestic violence on America's workplaces.

[Read the statement](#)

ABA Expresses Concerns Regarding the Military Commissions Act and Detention of Individuals at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba

On April 4, 2007, the ABA sent letters to the Chairs and Ranking Members of the House and Senate Armed Services Committees and shared some of its concerns regarding the Military Commissions Act (MCA) and the detention of individuals at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

[Read the House letter](#)

[Read the Senate letter](#)

March 2007

ABA Supports Restored Funding for Critical Grant Programs Serving At-Risk Youth

On March 27, 2007, the ABA sent a letter to the House and Senate Appropriations Subcommittees on Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies urging a restoration of funding in FY2008 for three critical grant programs that provide services for at-risk youth: the State Formula Grants, the Title V Local Delinquency Prevention Grants, and the Juvenile Accountability Block Grants.

[Read the House letter](#)

[Read the Senate letter](#)

ABA Supports H.R. 1433, the District of Columbia House Voting Rights Act of 2007

On March 21, 2007, the ABA sent a letter to all the members of the House of Representatives in support of H.R. 1433, the District of Columbia House Voting Rights Act of 2007. H.R. 1433 would establish the District of Columbia as a congressional district for purposes of representation in the House of Representatives.

[Read the letter](#)

ABA Urges the U.S. Sentencing Commission to Provide Guidance to Courts Regarding Sentence Reduction Motions for "Extraordinary and Compelling Reasons"

On March 20, 2007, the ABA testified before the United States Sentencing Commission regarding the USSC's obligation to give policy guidance to courts considering sentence reduction motions for "extraordinary and compelling reasons" under 18 U.S.C. § 3582(c)(1)A(i), and the ABA's resulting concerns about USSG § 1B1.13 (Reduction in Term of Imprisonment as a Result of Motion by Director of Bureau of Prisons).

[Read the statement](#)

ABA Supports Meaningful Access to Legal Information and Legal Representation for Detained Immigrants

On March 15, 2007, the ABA testified before the House Homeland Security Subcommittee on Border, Maritime and Global Counterterrorism about the need for accountability to ensure that immigration detainees have consistent, fair access to counsel and the legal system and outlined a number of steps that should be taken to address these concerns.

[Read the statement](#)

ABA Supports H.R. 1593, the Second Chance Act of 2007

On March 12, 2007, the ABA sent a letter to the House of Representatives in support of H.R. 1593, the Second Chance Act of 2007. The enactment of H.R. 1593 will help former prisoners successfully reenter our communities and thereby reduce recidivism.

[Read the letter](#)

ABA Opposes Erosion of the Attorney-Client Privilege and Other Legal Protections

On March 8, 2007, the ABA testified before the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, and Homeland Security on the subject of "The McNulty Memorandum's Effect on the Right to Counsel in Corporate Investigations" and urged the Subcommittee to help preserve companies' attorney-client privilege, work product, and employee legal protections by supporting legislation that would reverse Justice Department policies that erode these fundamental rights.

[Read the statement](#)

ABA Supports the John R. Justice Prosecutor and Defender Incentive Act of 2007

On March 5, 2007, the ABA sent a letter to the members of the Senate Committee on the Judiciary in support of the John R. Justice Prosecutor and Defender Incentive Act of

2007. The bill would provide law student loan repayment assistance to state and local prosecutors and federal, state and local public defenders.

[Read the letter](#)

February 2007

ABA Urges Judicial Conference to Amend Proposed Federal Rule of Evidence 502 Regarding Waiver of Attorney-Client Privilege

On February 15, 2007, the ABA submitted two separate comment letters to the Judicial Conference's Rules Committee recommending changes to proposed Federal Rule of Evidence 502 regarding waiver of attorney-client privilege and work product protections. The first letter, signed by Bill Ide, Chair of the ABA Task Force on Attorney-Client Privilege, addressed the issue of implied waiver and urged the Committee to add new language to FRE 502 that would allow companies to provide factual summaries of their internal investigations to the government without waiving the privilege as to underlying documents. The second letter, signed by ABA Litigation Section Chair Kim Askew, recommended changes to proposed FRE 502(b) regarding inadvertent disclosure of privileged materials.

[Read waiver letter](#)

[Read disclosure letter](#)

ABA Supports the Reauthorization of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act

On February 8, 2007, the ABA sent letters urging the swift reauthorization of The Indian Health Care Improvement Act to the Congressional leaders and to the chairman and the ranking member of the Senate Committee on: Budget; Finance; Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions; Indian Affairs and the House Committee on: Energy and Commerce; Natural Resources and Ways and Means, .

[Read the letter to Congressional Leadership](#)

[Read the letter to the Senate Committee on Budget](#)

[Read the letter Senate Committee on Finance](#)

[Read the letter Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions](#)

[Read the letter Senate Committee on Indian Affairs](#)

[Read the letter House Committee on Energy and Commerce](#)

[Read letter House Committee on Natural Resources](#)

[Read letter House Committee on Ways and Means](#)

ABA Supports Provisions of the Talent-Nelson Amendment to P.L. 109-364 Regarding Predatory Lending Practices

On February 8, 2007, the ABA sent a letter to the Federal Docket Management System Office of the Department of Defense in support of provisions of the Talent-Nelson Amendment of P.L. 109-364 that seek to protect the most vulnerable of our armed forces from abusive financial products.

[Read the comments](#)

ABA Urges SEC to Help Preserve Companies' Attorney-Client Privilege and Other Legal Protections

On February 5, 2007, ABA President Karen Mathis wrote to the Chairman of the Securities and Exchange Commission and urged him to help preserve companies' attorney-client privilege, work product, and employee legal protections by modifying the Commission's cooperation standards as contained in the 2001 "Seaboard Report." President Mathis also provided the Chairman with specific proposed revisions to the SEC's policy that were crafted by the ABA Task Force on Attorney-Client Privilege.

[Read the letter](#)

ABA Urges Meaningful Implementation of ICE National Detainee Transfer Standard

On February 1, 2007, the ABA urged the Department of Homeland Security to carefully and thoroughly consider the impact on detainees' access to counsel when making decisions whether to transfer immigration detainees between detention facilities, as required by the ICE National Detention Standards. The ABA opposes the involuntary transfer of detained immigrants and asylum seekers when the transfer impedes an existing attorney-client relationship and makes it difficult to obtain new representation.

[Read the letter](#)

January 2007

ABA Supports Codifying Immigration Detention Standards into Regulations

On January, 31, 2007, ABA President Karen Mathis wrote to the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security in support of a Petition for Rule-Making to Promulgate Regulations Governing Detention Standards for Immigration Detainees. In

particular, the ABA supports promulgating the four legal access standards into regulations.

[Read the letter](#)

ABA Supports Continued Funding for the Thurgood Marshall Legal Educational Opportunity Program

On January 25, 2007, the ABA sent letters to U.S. House and Senate Appropriations Committee chair and ranking member in support of continued funding for the Thurgood Marshall Legal Educational Opportunity Program ("Marshall Program") through the remainder of FY2007.

[Read the House letter](#)

[Read the Senate letter](#)

ABA Supports Legislation that Provides for Derivative Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for Children whose Parents are Granted TPS

On January 22, 2007, the ABA urged the lead drafters of comprehensive immigration reform legislation - Senator Edward Kennedy, Senator John McCain, Senator Harry Reid, Representative Jeff Flake, Representative Luis Gutierrez, and Representative Zoe Lofgren - to support including provisions in the legislation to provide for derivative Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for children whose parents are granted TPS. TPS provides temporary refuge to those already in the U.S. who cannot safely return home due to ongoing armed conflict, natural disasters, or other extraordinary circumstances.

[Read the letter](#)

ABA Urges Congressional Oversight of Presidential Signing Statements

On January 17, 2007, ABA President Karen Mathis wrote the leadership of the Congress urging them to hold hearings and enact clear legislation addressing the use of presidential signing statements. In the letter, the ABA highlighted the work of the Task Force on Presidential Signing Statements and the Separation of Powers Doctrine.

[Read the letter](#)

***ABA Washington Letter* Annual Legislative Chart Now Online**

The January 2007 edition of the *ABA Washington Letter* is the annual "Major Legislation of Interest to Lawyers," a chart highlighting action during the 109th Congress on ABA legislative policy issues. The 37-page chart contains more than 125 issues, details the status of legislation and the ABA policy positions, designates the association's legislative

priorities, and notes whether the association submitted policy statements in the form of policy letters or testimony.

[View the Annual Legislative Chart](#)

ABA Supports Stem Cell Research

On January 10, 2007, the ABA sent a letter to all Members of the U.S. House of Representatives in support of H.R. 3, legislation to provide federal support for research that utilizes human embryonic stem cells under strict scientific and ethical standards. The legislation ensures that only embryos that will not be used by individuals seeking fertility treatments and will otherwise be discarded are eligible for stem cell derivation.

[Read the letter](#)

ABA Recommends an Increase in Cap on Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) Funding

On January 4, 2007, the ABA submitted a written statement to the Honorable Rob Portman of the Office of Management and Budget recommending an increase in the amount of the cap on Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) funding.

[Read the statement](#)