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**STATEMENT OF H. THOMAS WELLS JR., PRESIDENT, AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION  
RE: THE AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE FEDERAL  
JUDICIARY**

The Obama Administration has requested that the American Bar Association Standing Committee on the Federal Judiciary resume its historical role in evaluating the professional qualifications of potential federal judicial nominees on a pre-nomination basis.

The ABA Standing Committee, which has been involved in the evaluation process for over 50 years, is pleased to continue to perform this important public service on a pre-nomination basis. Our goal is always to assist both the administration and the Senate Judiciary Committee as they deem appropriate in this process. As ABA president, I can assure you that our Standing Committee takes its role in the process very seriously.

The Standing Committee makes a unique contribution to the process by conducting an extensive peer review of each potential nominee's integrity, professional competence and judicial temperament. The Standing Committee does not consider a potential nominee's ideological or political philosophy. Its work is fully insulated from, and completely independent of, all other activities of the ABA, and is not influenced by ABA policies. The Standing Committee itself never proposes or endorses a particular candidate for the federal judiciary; its sole function is to assist the administration and the Senate in evaluating the professional qualifications of potential nominees for a life-time appointment to the federal bench.

The Standing Committee and the ABA look forward to working with the new administration.

*March 17, 2009*

For additional information, visit the ABA Standing Committee on the Federal Judiciary's Web site at <http://www.abanet.org/scfedjud/>

With more than 400,000 members, the American Bar Association is the largest voluntary professional membership organization in the world. As the national voice of the legal profession, the ABA works to improve the administration of justice, promotes programs that assist lawyers and judges in their work, accredits law schools, provides continuing legal education, and works to build public understanding around the world of the importance of the rule of law.

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