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Funding News

➤ **Alabama and Alaska Legislatures Provide New Funds for Legal Aid** - Alabama and Alaska have joined the ranks of states receiving state legislative funding for civil legal services. The Alabama legislature appropriated \$200,000, the first legislative appropriation ever received for Alabama's legal aid providers. The funds are in the state supreme court's budget, and planning for a disbursement process is underway. The Alaska Legal Services Corporation has also received an appropriation of \$200,000, its first in several years. There are now only three states that have no state legislative funding for civil legal aid. For more information on Alabama, contact Tracy Daniel, Executive Director, Alabama Law Foundation, at tdaniel@alfinc.org or 334/269-1515; for more information on Alaska, contact Andy Harrington, Executive Director, Alaska Legal Services Corporation, at aharrington@alsc-law.org or 907/452-5181.

➤ **More Funding Updates from the 2008 Legislative Session** - Colorado, the District of Columbia, New Mexico, Pennsylvania and West Virginia have recently reported increases in state legislative funding for legal services this year. A major increase in the filing fee surcharge in Virginia was reported in the February 2008 edition of *Legal Services Now*. Legislation including increases in legal aid funding is still alive in Illinois and Massachusetts. Unfortunately, a few states have reported decreases due to emerging budget problems. For more information, contact Meredith McBurney, Resource Development Consultant, ABA Resource Center for Access to Justice Initiatives, at meredithmcburney@msn.com or 303/329-8091.

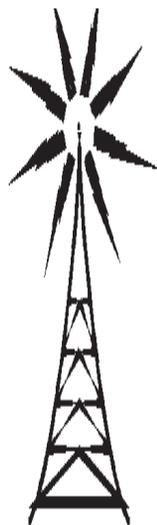
➤ **Hawaii Supreme Court Adopts IOLTA Interest Rate Comparability** - On June 16, 2008, the Hawaii Supreme Court issued an order approving revisions to the state's IOLTA rule to include interest rate comparability. This revenue enhancement strategy requires that lawyers place their IOLTA accounts only in a financial institution that pays those accounts the highest interest rate or dividend generally available at the institution to other customers when IOLTA accounts meet the same minimum balance or other qualifications. The revisions became effective on July 1, 2008. Hawaii is the 20th state to adopt IOLTA interest rate comparability. For additional information about this IOLTA revenue enhancement strategy and others, contact Bev Groudine, Counsel, ABA Commission on IOLTA, at bgroudine@staff.abanet.org or 312/988-5771.

Pro Bono News

➤ **Supreme Court of Nevada Establishes Emeritus Attorney Pro Bono Program** - On June 9, 2008, the Supreme Court of Nevada adopted new SCR 49.2 establishing an Emeritus Attorney Pro Bono Program, effective July 9, 2008. Twenty-eight states now have limited practice rules for emeritus attorneys. The Nevada rule creates an Emeritus Attorney Pro Bono Program to assist low-income clients in civil matters through not-for-profit legal assistance providers approved by the Nevada Access to Justice Commission. Any inactive member of the State Bar of Nevada in good standing, or any active or inactive attorney in good standing in another jurisdiction, who meets the requirements of the rule may apply for certification as an emeritus attorney in Nevada. For more information, contact Kristina Marzec, Director, Access to Justice Commission, State Bar of Nevada, at kristinam@nvbar.org or 800/254-2797.

➤ **Supreme Court of New Mexico Adopts Revised Rule of Professional Conduct** - Earlier this year, the Supreme Court of New Mexico adopted a rule establishing an annual aspirational goal for lawyers of providing 50 hours of pro bono service, contributing \$500 to a qualifying legal aid organization or providing a combination of pro bono hours and financial contributions. The rule includes a table of suggested financial contributions depending upon the number of pro bono hours a lawyer contributes. Additionally, lawyers must report their pro bono hours and/or financial contributions on their annual membership fees statement. For more information, contact Nita Taylor, Pro Bono Coordinator, State Bar of New Mexico, at ntaylor@nmba.org or 505/797-6077.

➤ **Tennessee Bar Association Approves Pro Bono Strategy** - The Tennessee Bar Association Board of Governors recently approved the Tennessee Pro Bono Strategy, developed by the TBA Access to Justice Committee in consultation with members of the private bar. The strategy, intended to serve as a working plan for increasing pro bono in the state, sets out a vision, including full pro bono participation by the private bar and its partnership with a variety of groups including the TBA Access to Justice Committee, the Private Attorney Involvement Program and other pro bono programs, the Tennessee Alliance for Legal Services (TALS), Tennessee law schools and the Tennessee Supreme Court. In addition, the strategy sets goals and objectives, as well as implementation strategies, which include expanding urban and rural partnerships, expanding alternative pro bono opportunities and increasing pro bono opportunities through the use of technology. For more information, contact Becky Rhodes, Access to Justice Coordinator, Tennessee Bar Association, at brhodes@tnbar.org or (615) 383-7421.



Washington Update

The House and Senate Appropriations Committees have now marked up their respective bills for FY 2009 and each has funded the Legal Services Corporation (LSC) at \$390 million, a \$40 million increase over FY 2008. For FY 2008, LSC received \$350.5 million. Prior to the mark-ups, ABA President William H. Neukom wrote the House and Senate Subcommittees in support of the bipartisan LSC Board's requested \$471 million, as a modest step toward closing the "justice gap."

President Neukom's letter included two important attachments, which further demonstrated nonpartisan, national support for providing more adequate funding for LSC: a first-of-its-kind letter signed by all 50 state bar association presidents (plus D.C., Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands) urging Congress to increase LSC funding to at least \$400 million; and the annual letter circulated by Senators Edward Kennedy (D-MA) and Gordon Smith (R-OR) supporting increased funding for LSC. This year's letter was signed by 55 Senators, with additional Senators sending personal letters to the Subcommittee. For more information on LSC funding, including copies of the above letters, contact Julie M. Strandlie, Director, Grassroots Operations/Legislative Counsel, at jstrandlie@staff.abanet.org or 202/662-1764.

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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.