



November 6, 2007 • Issue #60

Funding News

➤ **Wisconsin Legislature Provides New Funds for Legal Aid** - There was good news recently as the Wisconsin legislature wrapped-up its 2007 budget process—a new \$1 million appropriation for legal services to the poor. This significant new funding was achieved by a coalition of bench, bar and legal services leaders with strong support from the Wisconsin Supreme Court and the State Bar. There are now only five states that provide no state funding for civil legal services. For more information about this new funding, contact Jeff Brown, Pro Bono Coordinator, State Bar of Wisconsin, at jbrown@wisbar.org or 608/250-6177. For more information about state funding for legal services generally, contact Meredith McBurney, ABA Resource Center for Access to Justice Initiatives, at meredithmcburney@msn.com or 303/329-8091.

➤ **Alabama, California, Maine and North Carolina Adopt IOLTA Revisions to Increase Revenue** - As of January 1, 2008, Alabama, Maine and North Carolina will join the growing list of mandatory IOLTA states. In each state, the supreme court adopted mandatory IOLTA rules earlier this fall, requiring that all practicing lawyers participate in IOLTA. In addition, the Maine Supreme Court and the California legislature recently adopted interest rate comparability for IOLTA accounts. 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. For additional information about these and other IOLTA revenue enhancement strategies, contact Bev Groudine, Counsel, ABA Commission on IOLTA, at bgroudine@staff.abanet.org or 312/988-5771.

Pro Bono News

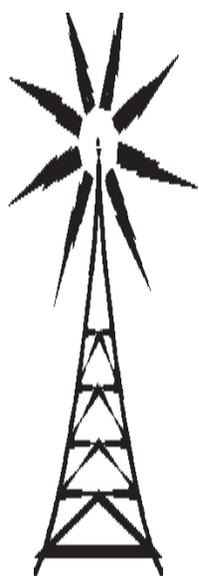
➤ **Pennsylvania Bar Association Approves Resolution Establishing Pro Bono Aspirational Goal** - The Pennsylvania Bar Association recently approved a resolution that each Pennsylvania attorney should comply with his or her local, county or state bar association pro bono aspirational goal, expectation or rule. The resolution also provides that, where no such goal or rule exists, a lawyer should meet a minimum annual aspirational goal of at least one pro bono matter or the provision annually of direct legal service or significant financial contribution to a nonprofit organization that provides legal services to persons of limited means. The resolution references ABA Model Rule 6.1 for determination of time to devote to direct legal service. The text of the resolution is available at <http://www.pabar.org/pdf/aspirationalgoal.pdf>. For more information, contact David Trevaskis, Pro Bono Coordinator for Legal Services, Pennsylvania Bar Association, at david.trevaskis@pabar.org or 800/932-0311.

➤ **Ohio State Bar Association Establishes Pro Bono Committee Task Force** - The Ohio State Bar Association formed a Pro Bono Committee Task Force charged with establishing a statewide network of locally based committees to promote and facilitate pro bono opportunities for attorneys. The task force, comprised of lawyers, judges and members of the legal aid community, will work to create a pro bono committee in each of Ohio's judicial appellate districts. For additional information, contact Jane Taylor, Associate Director for Pro Bono, Ohio Legal Assistance Foundation, at jtaylor@olaf.org or 614/728-6931.

➤ **South Dakota Adopts Emeritus Attorney Pro Bono Rule** - On January 1, 2008, South Dakota will become the 25th state with an emeritus attorney pro bono rule in effect. Lawyers or judges who

are or have been active members of the State Bar of South Dakota and are or will be retiring are eligible to register for emeritus status. Emeritus status lawyers may represent, on a pro bono basis, only clients referred to the lawyer by pro bono programs approved by the State Bar of South Dakota. For more information on South Dakota's new rule, contact Tom Barnett, Executive Director, State Bar of South Dakota, at thomas.barnett@sdbar.net or 605/224-7554. For more information on emeritus attorney pro bono rules and programs, contact Tony Barash, Director, ABA Center for Pro Bono, at barasha@staff.abanet.org or 312/988-5773.

➤ **State Bar of California Reaffirms Lawyers' Pro Bono Responsibility** - The State Bar of California Board of Governors approved a set of voluntary civility guidelines earlier this year designed to stem a perceived rise in unbecoming behavior by attorneys in and out of court. The California Attorney Guidelines of Civility and Professionalism are not designed to supersede those already in place at local bar associations but to complement them. Individual lawyers throughout the state are encouraged to sign on to the guidelines voluntarily. Section 2 of the Guidelines provides, "An attorney should be mindful that, as individual circumstances permit, the goals of the profession include improving the administration of justice and contributing time to persons and organizations that cannot afford legal assistance." The Guidelines can be found at <http://calbar.ca.gov/calbar/pdfs/reports/Atty-Civility-Guide.pdf>. For more information, contact, Mary Yen, Senior Attorney, Office of General Counsel of the State Bar of California, at mary.yen@calbar.ca.gov or 415/538-2369.



WASHINGTON UPDATE

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In October the Senate considered H.R. 3093, which includes funding for the Legal Services Corporation. The Senate Appropriations Committee in June had approved a \$42 million increase for LSC. On October 15, Senator John Thune (R-SD) offered an amendment to use \$20 million of that increase to fund a Justice Department program to prosecute violent crime on Indian reservations. In the first recorded floor vote since 1995, the Senate defeated Senator Thune's amendment 61-32. While everyone agreed that Senator Thune's benefactor program was in need of greater support, a strong bipartisan majority noted that LSC was still woefully under funded and rejected taking money from one program to aid the poor, to give to another. The Senate passed H.R. 3093 on October 17, including the full \$390 million for LSC. The bipartisan vote was 75-19, a veto-proof margin.

A House/Senate Conference must now resolve the differences in the House and Senate bills. The House had previously approved \$377 million for LSC. At press time, the president has threatened to veto this bill (and others) because spending exceeds his budget request. The Continuing Resolution passed by Congress in September to fund government programs pending completion of the appropriations bills expires on November 16, 2007. For more information, contact Julie Strandlie, Director, Grassroots Operations/Legislative Counsel, at jstrandlie@staff.abanet.org or 202/662-1764.

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.