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Funding News

✎ **More Good News on Legislative Funding for Legal Services** - Advocates in Massachusetts and New Jersey can be added to the list of those who have been successful in increasing their state legislative appropriations for legal services this year. Massachusetts obtained an increase of \$1,000,000 for general legal services and another \$500,000 for special projects. This brings the total state funding to over \$9,000,000: \$4,800,000 for general legal services, \$550,906 for medicare advocacy, \$2,521,289 for services to battered women and \$1,204,604 for a disability advocacy project. New Jersey's state funding for legal services was increased by \$1,500,000 for a new total of \$12,000,000. For more information or to report results of legislative activity, contact Meredith McBurney, Project Director, ABA Project to Expand Resources for Legal Services (PERLS), at mm8091@aol.com or 303/329-8091.

✎ **Ford Donates \$100,000 to Legal Aid** - Ford Motor Company recently donated \$100,000 to the Michigan Access to Justice Development Campaign, the statewide resource development effort for legal services. This campaign, which began in 1997, was created and funded for three years by the State Bar of Michigan. Contributions can be made to an endowment fund or for general operating activities, and the donor may designate a program to receive the funds. Ford designated its gift to the Legal Aid and Defender Association of Detroit to provide legal services to persons of limited means in the Detroit metropolitan area. In addition, Ford lawyers have each committed to provide a minimum of 30 hours of pro bono legal services to the poor or to donate \$300 to legal services organizations. For more information, contact Candace Crowley, Assistant Executive Director, Access to Justice Fundraising, State Bar of Michigan, at 517/346-6319.

✎ **Texas Litigation Update** - Briefing has been completed before the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals in the case of *Washington Legal Foundation, et al. v. Texas Equal Access to Justice Foundation, et al.* This action, which challenges the constitutionality of the Texas IOLTA Program, is on appeal from a grant of summary judgment in favor of TEAJF. Six organizations/coalitions filed amicus curiae briefs in support of the Texas IOLTA Program: the American Bar Association, the Conference of Chief Justices, the Independent Bankers Association of Texas, the National Association of IOLTA Programs, the State Bar of Texas and a coalition of Ohio groups including local bars, legal services providers and organizations representing the poor. The Association for Objective Law filed an amicus brief in support of WLF. As of press time, a date for oral arguments had not been set. For more information, contact Bev Groudine, Counsel, ABA Commission on IOLTA, at bgroudine@staff.abanet.org or 312/988-5771.

Pro Bono Developments

✎ **Georgia Adopts Rule 6.1** - On June 12, 2000, the Supreme Court of Georgia issued an Order deleting the Canon of Ethics and adopting the Georgia Rules of Professional Conduct, effective January 1, 2001. The new rules include Rule 6.1, which addresses attorneys' aspirational pro bono obligation. The language of Georgia's Rule 6.1 closely tracks the language of the ABA's Model Rule 6.1, including the recommendation of 50 hours of annual pro bono service and the definition of pro bono work. For further information, contact Mike Monahan, State Bar of Georgia Pro Bono Project, at 404/ 527-8762.

➤ **Pro Bono Commitment Strengthened at Executive Office for Immigration Review** - The Executive Office for Immigration Review, U.S. Department of Justice, recently created the position of pro bono coordinator. The pro bono coordinator is responsible for facilitating promotion of pro bono by the immigration court judiciary and the board of immigration appeals through the adoption of court policies and procedures. Additionally, the pro bono coordinator will facilitate communication and coordination between the judiciary and organizations providing legal assistance to immigrants. For additional information, contact Steven Lang, Executive Office for Immigration Review Pro Bono Coordinator, at 703/305-0470.

Hot On the Web

The Path to Pro Bono: An Interviewing Tool for Law Students - This resource, produced by the ABA Standing Committee on Pro Bono and Public Service and its project, the Center for Pro Bono, is designed to educate and empower law students to ask interviewing firms about their pro bono efforts and practices. The brochure contains sample interview questions and testimonials from prominent lawyers on the importance of incorporating pro bono into a job search and career. The Committee hopes that by encouraging students to ask questions about pro bono, firms will strengthen their pro bono efforts to compete for the best recruits. To download a copy of the brochure, visit <http://www.abanet.org/legalservices/probono.html>, the Pro Bono Committee's website.



WASHINGTON UPDATE

At press time, the Senate had not yet considered H.R. 4690, the Commerce, Justice, State (CJS) appropriations bill, which provides funding for the Legal Services Corporation. The Senate Appropriations Committee approved \$300 million for LSC for FY 2001; the House version of H.R. 4690 included \$275 million for LSC. The FY 2000 appropriation for LSC was \$305 million.

Various scenarios of how to enact the CJS bill and 10 other appropriations bills continue to circulate on Capitol Hill. It is widely expected that the CJS bill and funding for LSC will be determined in year-end, last minute negotiations between the House and Senate appropriators and leadership and the White House. The ABA has urged Congress to approve the Administration's request of \$340 million. Copies of all ABA correspondence are located at <http://www.abanet.org/poladv>. In the meantime, Congress will eventually pass several Continuing Resolutions to keep the government open until all FY 2001 appropriations are enacted.

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.