

AGENDA ITEM

SEPT 54-111

DATE: August 17, 2011

TO: Members, Board Committee on Operations
Members, Board of Governors

FROM: Mary L. Flynn, Director, Office of Legal Services

SUBJECT: Campaign for Justice Month Declaration

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Campaign for Justice is dedicated to increasing resources for legal aid programs across the state, and has been co-sponsored by the Legal Aid Association of California (LAAC), in coordination with the Access to Justice Commission, SCDLS, the Legal Services Trust Fund Program and individual legal services programs. The Campaign's goal is to increase both pro bono and financial contributions to legal services.

The Campaign objectives incorporate existing outreach efforts designed to increase donations to the Justice Gap Fund and to increase attorney pro bono involvement. The Campaign fits within ongoing work and will be undertaken within current budgets. Modeled after efforts in many other states, the Campaign will leverage resources by strengthening partnerships within the broader statewide community.

The Campaign will launch a coordinated statewide effort in October 2011 and requests that the State Bar Board of Governors approve the State Bar's partnership in the Campaign and adopt a resolution that recognizes October 2011 as Campaign for Justice Month.

BACKGROUND

With the economic recession and the current low federal funds target rate, the IOLTA funds in California have decreased significantly over the last three years, resulting in unavoidable cuts in IOLTA funding for legal services for Californians in need. In September 2010, California legal services organizations undertook a "Campaign for Justice" to raise funds for legal services, as well as to increase pro bono and heighten awareness of the financial crisis facing the legal services community. The Campaign was conceived by a committee of representatives of the Office of Legal Services of the State Bar of California, the Legal Aid Association of California, and legal aid representatives.

Mission: For the California community to use a variety of strategies to raise new, additional funds for IOLTA-funded legal services nonprofits.

Short Term Objectives: Raise \$10 million over a period of three years (2011, 2012, and 2013) to offset and buffer projected cuts in IOLTA funding; expand pro bono services; launch a new communications effort to educate key audiences about the importance of legal services.

Long Term Objectives: Continue to leverage ways to raise additional, supplemental funds for IOLTA-funded programs even when the economy recovers; continue to expand support for pro bono work; and continue to build an effective communications effort that benefits both the Campaign for Justice and individual legal services work and greater understanding by the key audiences about the value of legal services work.

Components of the Campaign for Justice:

The proposed components of the Campaign during October will include:

- Messages for lawyers that it is important to do pro bono work and to contribute to legal aid programs so as to ensure that there is access to justice.
- Articles and op eds designed for the legal profession will be placed with appropriate media outlets.
- The Justice Gap Fund will be launched for the 2011-2012 Campaign.
- New “Campaign for Justice” Website will be launched with links to all components of the Campaign.
- Legal aid programs will be asked to participate; in addition to updating their online pro bono information on probono.net, they will be asked to select their involvement from a menu of ways to get involved:
 - Open house events
 - Reaching out to local bar association
 - Giving seminars/workshops at firms or for local bar
 - Promoting articles in legal publications
 - Conducting outreach to their board members to participate.
- Campaign will coordinate with Pro Bono Week (October 24th through 28th)
 - Attorneys will be encouraged to do pro bono, and referred to www.californiaprobono.org
 - Participation in the Pro Bono Practice Program will also be encouraged (formerly the Emeritus Attorney Program)
- Local bar associations will be asked to include articles about the campaign in their publications, in an email to members, and/or to conduct pro bono workshops and seminars.
- Corporate outreach will also be conducted to corporate counsel.

FISCAL/STAFF IMPACT

None. The California Bar Foundation granted \$10,000 to support the Campaign website, and if any other costs are incurred, they will be accommodated within existing budgets.

BOARD BOOK/ADMINISTRATIVE MANUAL IMPACT

None

RECOMMENDATION

The Office of Legal Services recommends that the Board of Governors approve the State Bar's partnership in the Campaign and adopt a resolution recognizing October 2011 as "Campaign for Justice" month.

RESOLUTION

If the Board Operations Committee agrees with the above recommendation, the following resolution is suggested:

RESOLVED, that the Board Operations Committee recommends that the Board of Governors adopt the following resolution:

WHEREAS IOLTA funds in California have decreased significantly over the last three years, resulting in unavoidable cuts in IOLTA funding for legal services for Californians in need; and

WHEREAS California legal services organizations have undertaken a "Campaign for Justice" to increase resources for legal services; and

WHEREAS the lead entities in the Campaign to date are the Office of Legal Services of the State Bar of California and the Legal Aid Association of California, and

WHEREAS the Campaign for Justice will launch a coordinated statewide effort in October 2011 that includes a Campaign website and other outreach strategies;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of the Governors of the State Bar of California approves the State Bar's partnership in the Campaign for Justice, and recognizes October 2011 as Campaign for Justice Month.