



LEGAL SERVICES TRUST
FUND PROGRAM

CALIFORNIA COMMISSION
ON ACCESS TO JUSTICE

THE STATE BAR OF CALIFORNIA
180 HOWARD STREET, SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA 94105-1639
TELEPHONE: (415) 538-2000
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May 7, 2009

RE: The Role of Legal Aid and the Recovery Effort

Dear Colleague:

We are writing to bring your attention to the vital role that California's legal aid programs are playing right now, as our communities across the state are facing historic levels of unemployment, homelessness, bankruptcies, evictions, foreclosures, and family-related problems such as domestic violence.

It is critical to the recovery effort that low-income families get the help they need to stabilize their lives. And helping vulnerable Californians with these types of legal issues is the kind of work that legal aid programs have been doing for decades.

Although it is very important that stimulus funds are distributed as quickly as possible, we are all aware that speed can make it difficult to ensure that the funds get in the hands of the most effective partners to achieve our goals.

We are therefore writing to urge you to involve your local legal services programs in any collaborative effort that is addressing problems such as:

- Homelessness prevention;
- Developing affordable housing;
- Ensuring domestic violence restraining orders;
- Expanding access to health care and education for those with disabilities; and
- Establishing guardianships to stabilize families.

The attached document entitled "The Role of Legal Aid and the Recovery Effort" was produced by the California Commission on Access to Justice and the State Bar of California's Legal Services Trust Fund Program. It provides a good description of the ways in which legal aid programs can help achieve the goals of the stimulus package.

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Thank you for your role in helping to achieve a quick, effective, and deep recovery within our low-income communities across the state.

Very truly yours,



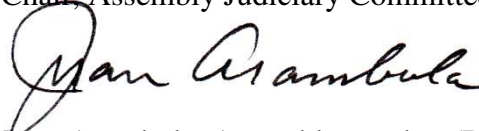
Holly Fujie
President, State Bar of California



Hon. Ellen Corbett, Senator (D-San Leandro)
Chair, Senate Judiciary Committee



Mike Feuer, Assemblymember (D-Los Angeles)
Chair, Assembly Judiciary Committee



Juan Arambula, Assemblymember (D-Fresno)
Chair, Budget Subcommittee 4 – State Administration



Hon. Dave Jones, Assemblymember (D-Sacramento)
Chair, Assembly Health Committee

Enclosure: “The Role of Legal Aid and the Recovery Effort”

Link to list of Legal Aid Programs: A list of legal aid programs funded by the State Bar of California can be found at: www.calbar.org/iolta