

AGENDA ITEM

May 111 Consideration of ABA's Request for Approval by the State Bar of a Joint Letter by State Bars to Members of Congress in Support of Continued Funding of Legal Services Corporation, Report of Action taken March 28, 2011, by the Board Committee on Operations on Behalf of the Board Between Meetings

DATE: April 22, 2011

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

FROM: Cathy Torney, Board Committee Coordinator

SUBJECT: Consideration of ABA's Request for Approval by the State Bar of a Joint Letter by State Bars to Members of Congress in Support of Continued Funding of Legal Services Corporation, Report of Action taken March 28, 2011, by the Board Committee on Operations on Behalf of the Board Between Meetings

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This is a report of action on March 28, 2011, by the Board Committee on Operations, which is authorized to act on behalf of the Board of Governors between regular meetings of the board. The Committee met by conference call to consider authorizing the President to join representatives from other states bars and the American Bar Association to support continued funding for the federal Legal Services Corporation without the cuts proposed by the House of Representatives.

DISCUSSION

The agenda item presented a request by Justice Ronald Robie, the Chair of the California Commission on Access to Justice, and Mary Flynn, Director of the State Bars Legal Services Outreach, for authorization of the President of the State Bar of California to signed a letter supporting continued funding of the federal Legal Services Corporation, which provides major funding for legal services programs to the poor, including those in California. At the time of the meeting, 47 other state bars had already signed the letter. After discussion, a motion was made and seconded that the State Bar of California not sign on to the letter.

A quorum was reached and the Board Committee voted to adopt the following resolution:

RESOLVED, that the Board Committee on Operations, acting on behalf of the Board of Governors between regular meetings, does not authorize its President to sign the letter joining with the American Bar Association and other state bar associations to support funding of the Legal Services Corporation.

All members, except Ms.Chick, were present, and the vote was 4 to 3 in favor of the resolution with Messrs Chairez, Streeter, and Dunn voting against it.

A copy of the agenda item is attached.*

****Note: After the Board Committee meeting, twelve members of the Board of Governors called for a special meeting of the full Board under State Bar Rule 6.50(B) to consider the request and a revised letter of support. On April 8, 2011, the full Board met by conference call and voted 12 to 3 to authorize the President to sign the new letter.***