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September 14, 2007

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL AND U.S. MAIL

Mr. Tom Boller
State Bar of Georgia Advisory Committee on Legislation
104 Marietta Street NE
Atlanta, GA 30303

Re: Legislative Proposal for Domestic Violence Funding for the 2009 Fiscal Year

Dear Mr. Boller:

I write on behalf of the Women & Minorities in the Profession Committee to request the State Bar of Georgia's endorsement of legislation that would provide an appropriation for domestic violence legal services to the poor. As you may recall, last year the Women & Minorities in the Profession Committee sought the endorsement of the State Bar of Georgia for this legislation, which provided for an appropriation to non-profit organizations that provide civil legal services to low-income Georgians. It is our Committee's understanding that for the State Bar of Georgia to endorse this legislation for the upcoming fiscal year, the proposal must be renewed before the Advisory Committee on Legislation. As a result, our Committee wishes to propose an appropriation of \$2.2 million for the 2009 fiscal year.

In 1998, the General Assembly appropriated \$2 million as part of the Georgia Supreme Court Chief Justice's budget. The funds were appropriated for use in providing domestic violence legal services to the poor. That year, the General Assembly recognized the importance of providing legal services to victims of domestic violence, and has provided funding to do so every year since. For the 2008 fiscal year, the General Assembly renewed its commitment to stopping domestic violence and provided \$2,189,360 to fund this budget item.

The Women & Minorities in the Profession Committee is aware of no opposition to this proposal for the appropriation of \$2.2 million for the 2009 fiscal year. It is our Committee's understanding that we do not need to submit the specific language for the

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legislation at this time because this is a budget item. Furthermore, this proposal satisfies the *Keller* criteria because it is within the scope and purposes of the State Bar of Georgia to advance the administration of justice. It also is consistent with past actions by the Board of Governors in support of access to legal services by the poor. If you have any questions regarding this matter, please contact me at 404.853.8497. Thank you for your consideration of our request.

Very truly yours,



Allegra J. Lawrence-Hardy
Chairperson, Women & Minorities in the
Profession Committee

AJL/tlc

cc: Ms. Sharon Bryant
Ms. Cynthia Hinrichs Clanton
Ms. Wanda Segars