

Release: Immediate
Contact: Name of Local Bar President
Phone:

_____ COUNTY COMMISSION RECOGNIZES
PRO BONO WEEK WITH RESOLUTION

- **Weeklong campaign spotlights need for increased legislative funding and more lawyers to volunteer to provide free legal service to the state's poor and disadvantaged**

_____, **Alabama**, _____, **2010** – At its regularly scheduled meeting (date) the _____ County Commission presented a Resolution officially declaring Pro Bono Week in County, October 24-31, 2010. The resolution was presented by Commissioner _____, to (county) Bar President _____ (name of law firm).

“Providing access to justice for those who cannot afford it levels the playing field. When we improve access to the state's courts we are actually helping Alabama families help themselves,” (local bar president) said.

The situation is particularly acute because the recession has caused many financial problems to morph into legal problems and increasing numbers of the poor and disadvantaged are turning to legal aid programs because they have nowhere else to go. The right to counsel in civil cases is necessary to make equal justice under law a reality. But last year, for more than half a million poor persons in Alabama, the only reality was a pressing legal problem that went unresolved.

(local bar president) said that the types of unresolved civil legal problems include: women who are seeking protection from abuse, mothers trying to obtain child support or custody of their children, families who are facing unlawful eviction or foreclosure that could leave them homeless, and individuals who have lost their job and need unemployment benefits.

During Pro Bono Week, lawyers in each of the state's 42 judicial circuits will participate in events such as: conducting free legal clinics offering advice and counsel in areas such as elder and family law; discussing with community and civic groups the critical need for the Legislature to provide a continuous stream of funding for legal services, and recruiting additional lawyers to volunteer to provide pro bono service.

This special event is being co-sponsored by the (name of local bar) and the 16,000-member Alabama State Bar which is dedicated improving the administration of justice and increasing public understanding and respect for the law.

