

Conference of Chief Justices Conference of State Court Administrators

Resolution 2

In Support of Efforts to Increase Access to Justice

WHEREAS, the Conference of Chief Justices (CCJ) and the Conference of State Court Administrators (COSCA) have long been committed to the fundamental principle of fair access to justice for all in civil matters; and

WHEREAS, ensuring access to justice in adversarial proceedings involving basic human needs, such as shelter, sustenance, safety, health or child custody, remains one of the Conferences' highest priorities; and

WHEREAS, CCJ and COSCA have previously adopted joint resolutions recognizing that a fundamental requirement of access to justice is access to the courts, and that this access extends to both lawyer-represented and self-represented litigants; and

WHEREAS, such resolutions include (1) Joint Resolution 31, adopted on August 1, 2002, supporting expansion of self-help services to litigants; encouraging discrete task representation by counsel, increasing pro bono assistance, and encouraging the development of other mechanisms that expand the provision of counsel in those cases in which other efforts to assist litigants are inadequate to overcome barriers and (2) Joint Resolution 25, adopted on July 29, 2004, accepting the proposal of the ABA's Standing Committee on Legal Aid and Indigent Defendants to work jointly with the Conferences to enhance efforts to increase access to justice through education programs and assistance to individual states;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Conferences encourage their members in each state and territory to continue to take steps to ensure that no citizen is denied access to the justice system by reason of lack of resources, or any other such barrier, and that the Conferences urge their members to take a leadership role in their respective jurisdictions to prevent denials of access to justice.

Adopted at the COSCA 2008 Annual Meeting on July 30, 2008.