

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF THE NATIONAL CRIMINAL JUSTICE COMMISSION

ACT OF 2011 (S. 306)

WHEREAS the Coalition of Bar Associations of Color (CBAC), organized in 1983, is a coalition created to act as a collective voice for issues of common concern to its member organizations; and

WHEREAS the member organizations of the Coalition of Bar Associations of Color are the Hispanic National Bar Association (HNBA), the National Asian Pacific American Bar Association (NAPABA), the National Bar Association (NBA), and the National Native American Bar Association (NNABA); and

WHEREAS the United States has the highest rate of incarceration in the world, with 2.3 million people in prisons and jails;

WHEREAS the conditions under which Americans are incarcerated and the manner in which former inmates reenter society is a compelling national interest that potentially affects every person;

WHEREAS people of color make up a disproportionately large share of prison populations, and where Black males have a 32 percent chance of serving time in prison at some point in their lives; Hispanic males have a 17 percent chance; and white males have a 6 percent chance;

WHEREAS prisons and jails have become holding facilities for the mentally ill, with an estimated 350,000 men and women in prisons and jails with serious mental disorders and approximately 4 times as many mentally ill people in prisons than in mental health hospitals;

WHEREAS the Federal and state governments spend more than \$50 billion each year on corrections, yet the population behind bars continues to grow;

WHEREAS a new approach to crime prevention is necessary and the time for reform is upon us;

WHEREAS on March 26, 2009 Senator Jim Webb (D-VA) introduced the National Criminal Justice Commission Act (S-306);

WHEREAS the National Criminal Justice Commission Act would create a blue ribbon commission charged with undertaking a comprehensive review of the nation's criminal justice system, including federal, state, and local policies and practices, and offer recommendations for reform at every stage of the system;

WHEREAS the blue ribbon commission established by the National Criminal Justice Commission Act would make specified findings related to incarceration, prison administration, the impact of gang activity, drug policy, mental illness among prisoners and the role of the military in crime prevention; make recommendations for changes in policies and laws to address these findings; consult with government and nongovernmental leaders,

including state and local law enforcement officials; and submit a final report to Congress and the President and make such report public;

WHEREAS the National Criminal Justice Commission Act has gained the bipartisan support of 22 members of the Senate and endorsements from more than 100 organizations;

WHEREAS under the bill, commission members would be appointed by the President, Senate Majority and Minority Leaders, and the Speaker and Minority Leader of the House of Representatives;

WHEREAS the bill, re-introduced by Senator Webb on February 8, 2011 was referred to the Senate Judiciary Committee and awaits action in the Committee;

WHEREAS Congressman William Delahunt (D-MA) has indicated strong interest in introducing the bill in the House of Representatives and, upon information and belief, is poised to do so;

WHEREAS it is critical that people with the appropriate qualifications be appointed to this Commission, including the Executive Director, and shall be individuals who are nationally recognized for expertise, knowledge, or experience in such relevant areas as law enforcement, criminal justice, national security, prison administration, prisoner reentry, public health, including drug addiction and mental health, victims' rights, and social services;

WHEREAS there currently exists a National Criminal Justice Act Coalition which meets periodically and has, as part of its agenda, to vet and make recommendations to the President, Senate Majority and Minority Leaders, and Speaker and Minority Leader of the House of Representatives, of persons to be appointed to the National Criminal Justice Commission;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Coalition of Bar Associations of Color supports the passage of the National Criminal Justice Commission Act (S. 306); and its counterpart in the House of Representatives, when introduced;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Coalition of Bar Associations of Color will forward a copy of this resolution to members of Congress who have not co-sponsored the National Criminal Justice Commission Act (S. 306) to seek their support; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Coalition of Bar Associations of Color will forward a copy of this resolution to their member affiliates seeking support of the National Criminal Justice Commission Act (S. 306) and complementary legislation when introduced in the House of Representatives, and asking individual the Coalition of Bar Associations of Color members to contact their members of Congress to indicate support of the National Criminal Justice Commission Act; and

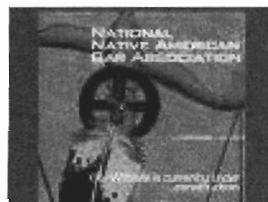
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Coalition of Bar Associations of Color will provide input to the National Criminal Justice Commission Act Coalition as the Coalition vets and makes recommendations to the President, Senate Majority and Minority Leaders, and Speaker and Minority Leader of the House of

Representatives, of persons to be appointed to the National Criminal Justice Commission, including its Executive Director;

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that this resolution shall be the legislative priority of the Coalition of Bar Associations of Color until it is withdrawn or modified by subsequent resolution.

CERTIFICATION

WE, the duly-elected Presidents of the Hispanic National Bar Association (HNBA), the National Asian Pacific American Bar Association (NAPABA), the National Bar Association (NBA), and the National Native American Bar Association (NNABA), hereby certify that they foregoing Resolution was duly enacted by a duly-noticed meetings of the Board of Directors.



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Diana Sen
President, Hispanic National Bar Association

A handwritten date "7/28/11" written in black ink over a horizontal line.

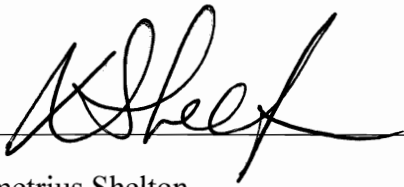
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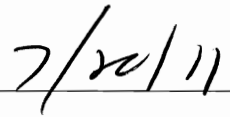
Paul O. Hirose
President, National Asian Pacific American Bar Association

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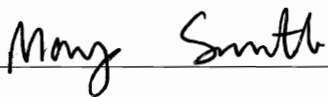
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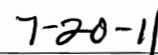
Demetrius Shelton
President, National Bar Association



Date



Mary Smith
President-Elect, National Native American Bar Association



Date