Resolution Urging Congress to Fully Fund the Criminal Justice Act

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 CBAC 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 need for competent CJA panel attorneys has increased; however, low compensation rates have made it difficult to both retain and recruit qualified attorneys; and

WHEREAS, a recent Government Accountability Office (GAO) study disclosed that hourly rates routinely paid by major federal agencies for legal services substantially exceed those paid to CJA panel attorneys; and

WHEREAS, increased hourly rates are needed to recruit and retain qualified CJA panel attorneys.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the CBAC urges Congress to fully fund the Criminal Justice Act with sufficient funds to increase the compensation for panel attorneys appointed under the Act to represent indigent defendants to a flat rate of $113 per hour, plus annual pay adjustments.

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the CBAC will forward a copy of this resolution to President Barack Obama, and the Congressional leadership of both parties; and

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the CBAC authorizes the communication of the content of this resolution to members of the U.S. Senate, members of the U.S. House of Representatives, the press, and to others the CBAC deems appropriate to receive the information; and

THEREFORE BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that this resolution shall be the legislative priority of the CBAC until it is withdrawn or modified by subsequent resolution.
CERTIFICATION

We, the duly elected leadership of the Hispanic National Bar Association, the National Asian Pacific American Bar Association, the National Bar Association, and the National Native American Bar Association, hereby certify that this resolution was duly enacted by the CBAC at its annual meeting on the 16th of May 2012.

Nimesh Patel
President, National Asian Pacific American Bar Association

Peter M. Reyes, Jr.
President-Elect, Hispanic National Bar Association

Daryl Parks
President, National Bar Association

Patty Ferguson-Bohnee
President, National Native American Bar Association