

**STATE BAR OF MONTANA
RESOLUTION NO. 1**

W**HEREAS**, the State Bar of Montana has supported the operations of Montana Legal Services Association since 1966 when it was formed; and,

WHEREAS, nearly 20% of all Montanans are eligible for assistance by Montana Legal Services Association; and

WHEREAS, the State Bar works with Montana Legal Services Association, the Montana Supreme Court's Access to Justice Commission and a host of other access-to-justice stakeholders in Montana; and

WHEREAS, Montana' judiciary has been responsive and supportive in creating new and effective *pro bono* and *pro se* programs throughout the state; and

WHEREAS, the private bar has been supportive and responsive to the need for legal representation of Montanan's living in poverty; and

WHEREAS, private attorney involvement, together with the strong delivery system of the Montana Legal Services Association, is still unable to serve all legal needs of those unable to afford essential legal services; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the State Bar of Montana, in its annual meeting, assembled at Missoula, this 13th day of September 2024, does hereby

STRONGLY URGE Congress to maintain a firm national commitment to providing equal access to the system of justice for the nation's poor, as called for under the Legal Services Corporation Act of 1974; and

STRONGLY URGE the United States Congress to increase federal funding for the legal services programs nationwide, especially this year when the need is even greater; and

STRONGLY URGE all members of the State Bar of Montana to participate in *pro bono* programs established through the collaboration and cooperation between the State Bar of Montana, local bar associations, MLSA, and various other entities, to assist in providing legal services for those unable to pay.

Adopted by the membership of the State Bar of Montana, September 13, 2024.