

**THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND THE
JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATION SECTION OF THE
FLORIDA CONFERENCE OF CIRCUIT COURT JUDGES**

**RESOLUTION CONCERNING THE PROPOSED
AMENDMENTS TO THE CODE OF JUDICIAL CONDUCT
AND THE RULES REGULATING THE FLORIDA BAR RE:
PRO BONO ACTIVITIES BY JUDGES AND JUDICIAL STAFF, SC02-
1034**

WHEREAS, the Task Force on Pro Bono Activities by Judges and Judicial Staff and the Florida Bar Standing Committee on Pro Bono Legal Services have filed a proposal with the Florida Supreme Court concerning pro bono services by all levels of judges in the Florida Judiciary; and

WHEREAS, such proposal sets forth a goal of 20 hours of pro bono services or alternatively, an annual contribution of \$350 to a legal aid organization, and further provides for mandatory reporting of such pro bono services; and

WHEREAS, such pro bono service is inconsistent with the Florida Code of Judicial Conduct and infringes upon and compromises the independence of the courts; and

WHEREAS, the Florida Supreme Court Judicial Ethics Advisory Committee, as an alternative to the proposal of the Task Force and Committee, filed a petition to amend the Florida Code of Judicial Conduct recommending that the Code reflect that judges should:

- 1) be encouraged to engage in activities to improve the law, the legal system and the administration of justice;
- 2) encourage attorneys to perform pro bono services; and
- 3) be encouraged to speak, write, lecture, teach and participate in other extra judicial activities concerning non-legal matters, subject to the requirements of the Code; and

WHEREAS, the proposal of the Florida Supreme Court Judicial Ethics Advisory Committee advances the public interest as well as protects the independence of the courts;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Executive Committee and the Judicial Administration Section of the Florida Conference of Circuit Court Judges **UNANIMOUSLY**:

1. Support the proposal of the Florida Supreme Court Judicial Ethics Advisory Committee to amend

the Florida Code of Judicial Conduct generally encouraging judges to support pro bono legal services and encouraging judges to participate in extra judicial activities; and

2. Oppose the proposal of the Task Force and Committee requiring annual reporting by judges of delivery of pro bono legal services or, in the alternative, payment of a \$350 annual assessment to a legal aid organization; and
3. Direct the Chair of the Florida Conference of Circuit Court Judges to communicate the position of the Conference to the Florida Supreme Court by the filing of this resolution.

Dated this 21st day of August, 2002.

Belvin Perry, Jr., Chair
Florida Conference of Circuit Court Judges