

**FINAL RESOLUTION OF THE MASSACHUSETTS LEGAL ASSISTANCE
CORPORATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS
In Support of Client Representation on Boards of Directors
of MLAC-Funded Programs**

Whereas, the Massachusetts Legal Assistance Corporation (MLAC) from its creation has recognized that participation by client-eligible persons in the governance of legal services organizations is a critical component of access to justice for persons of low income; and

Whereas, MLAC in its "Strategic Direction" plan, recognizing the increasing cultural and linguistic diversity of legal aid clients, emphasized the importance of supporting cultural and linguistic competence, as well as increased diversity of staff and Board members of legal aid programs;

Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved that the MLAC Board of Directors, to further strengthen the voice and contribution of client board members in the governance of legal services, will endeavor to:

- Create an environment that is welcoming and respectful of client board members' ideas and perspectives;
- Commit to working toward increased cultural competence of all Board members;
- Establish a respectful learning environment for client board members which incorporates mentoring, training and skill development designed to enable meaningful client board member participation in decision-making and governance of the legal services program;
- Commit to the development and implementation of client board member recruitment and retention planning which values diversity and which provides client board members with opportunities for leadership;
- Provide opportunities for client board members to meaningfully participate in the full range of Board responsibilities.

Be it Further Resolved that the MLAC Board of Directors will promote, support and encourage the participation of client Board members and will recognize the contributions of client Board members.

Be it Finally Resolved that the MLAC Board of Directors urges the Boards of Directors of all programs receiving funding from MLAC to demonstrate their support of client participation in the governance of their program by adopting a similar resolution.

Adopted by the MLAC Board of Directors on this the 25th day of September, 2008.

Robert Foster, Board Chair