

**CONFERENCE OF CHIEF JUSTICES
CONFERENCE OF STATE COURT ADMINISTRATORS**

Resolution

In Support of Passage of *Standards for Language Access in the Courts* per ABA Resolution 113

WHEREAS, language access services have long been a priority issue for the Conference of Chief Justices (CCJ) and the Conference of State Court Administrators (COSCA) through the Conferences' efforts to eliminate language barriers in the courts; and

WHEREAS, the Conferences have been the leaders in developing and expanding access to court services across the country through such activities as (1) establishing of the Consortium for Language Access in the Courts, (2) proposing federal legislation to establish a grant program to assist state courts in enhancing and expanding court interpreter services, (3) supporting the National Center for State Courts' development of education programs for judges and court administrators, and (4) encouraging the establishment of commissions to improve access to justice; and

WHEREAS, the American Bar Association (ABA) established the Language Access Project to develop language access standards for courts, published proposed standards, and will present revised standards for consideration by the ABA House of Delegates; and

WHEREAS, the Conferences had expressed major concerns with the proposed standards, which were delineated in CCJ/COSCA Resolution 11-A-1; and

WHEREAS, the ABA, in response to these concerns, established a work group to review the concerns and work with the Conferences on the shared goal of improving language access in the courts for persons with limited English proficiency (LEP); and

WHEREAS, over the last four months representatives of the ABA, the National Center for State Courts, and the Conferences have spent considerable hours working in the spirit of cooperation and collaboration developing a revised document to include a mutually agreeable format and language for the standards; and

WHEREAS, the revised standards are aspirational and provide guidance for implementation of the standards; and

WHEREAS, as a result of these discussions, the Conferences' major concerns have been addressed in the revised standards;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Conference of Chief Justices and the Conference of State Court Administrators support passage of the revised *Standards for*

Language Access in the Courts by the ABA House of Delegates at the 2012 ABA Midyear Meeting: and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Conferences express appreciation to the ABA, the ABA Standing Committee on Legal Aid and Indigent Defendants, and the ABA Language Access Project Steering Committee for their willingness to work with the Conferences on this critical issue of access to justice and improving language access services in the courts; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Conferences, as a part of their continuing efforts to ensure equal access to justice for LEP individuals in courts, will convene a national summit in October 2012 in Houston, Texas, to bring together chief justice-led state teams composed of representatives from all three branches of government and the state bar to develop state specific strategies for improving access to justice for limited English proficient individuals.

Approved by the CCJ and COSCA Boards of Directors on December 8, 2011