



THE SUPREME COURT OF PENNSYLVANIA

FULTON BUILDING  
16TH FLOOR  
200 NORTH THIRD STREET  
HARRISBURG, PA 17101

THOMAS G. SAYLOR  
CHIEF JUSTICE

(717) 772-1599

January 23, 2017

Dear Counselor:

I write to thank you for your contributions of financial support which you have provided to legal aid programs, as a component of your annual attorney registration fees.

As I have done in the past, I join with Pennsylvania Bar Association President Sara Austin in asking that you consider an additional personal commitment by providing pro bono service through direct representation of the poor and financial support of the Commonwealth's legal aid programs.

Rule of Professional Conduct 6.1 calls for lawyers licensed in Pennsylvania to "render public interest legal service." It is these volunteer efforts, beyond the mandatory payment, that most greatly impact those in need.

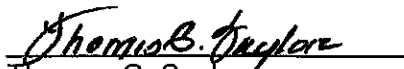
The Pennsylvania Supreme Court is dedicated to ensuring that the civil legal needs of those who cannot afford the services of a lawyer are met. The Court supports civil legal aid in a variety of ways, from securing funding for a loan forgiveness program for legal services practitioners to honoring the work of pro bono volunteers.

Pennsylvania's efforts in this area will be highlighted when it hosts the 2017 American Bar Association and National Legal Aid and Defender Association Equal Justice Conference in Pittsburgh May 4-6. We can take pride in what we have done, but must realize there is more to do. To see the many *pro bono* opportunities that exist, please consider visiting [palawhelp.org](http://palawhelp.org) and registering at [paprobono.net](http://paprobono.net).

In searching for a persuasive rationale to encourage your participation, I came across the words of former U.S. Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor. To close, I offer them for your reflection and thank those of you who already contribute your time and financial support, which demonstrates the best of our profession.

"Certainly, life as a lawyer is a bit more complex today than it was a century ago. The ever-increasing pressures of the legal marketplace, the need to bill hours, to market to clients, and to attend to the bottom line, have made fulfilling the responsibilities of community service quite difficult. But public service marks the difference between a business and a profession. While a business can afford to focus solely on profits, a profession cannot. It must devote itself first to the community it is responsible to serve. I can imagine no greater duty than fulfilling this obligation. And I can imagine no greater pleasure." – *Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, speech at the University of Oregon (1999)*

Sincerely,

  
Thomas G. Saylor  
Chief Justice of Pennsylvania