



THE SUPREME COURT OF PENNSYLVANIA
PENNSYLVANIA JUDICIAL CENTER
601 COMMONWEALTH AVENUE, 8TH FLOOR
P.O. BOX 60828
HARRISBURG, PA 17106-0828

THOMAS G. SAYLOR
CHIEF JUSTICE

(717) 772-1599

February 2019

Dear Counselor:

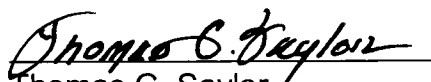
I write to commend the example of the many lawyers, judges and others in our Commonwealth who strive to extend equal access to justice to all of our citizens in Pennsylvania, across the socio-economic spectrum. I also ask each individual lawyer to make a personal assessment as to whether he or she can contribute more of their time and talents to this essential endeavor.

We are all aware that the needs of our least advantaged citizens continue to challenge both the criminal and civil justice systems. The Pennsylvania Supreme Court supports civil legal aid in a variety of ways, from funding a loan forgiveness program for legal services practitioners to celebrating the work of pro bono volunteers. In addition, the Court has approved the creation of a new continuing legal education (CLE) pilot program aimed at increasing support for civil legal aid for low-income Pennsylvanians by allowing lawyers to earn up to three CLEs through pro bono service.

Every attorney in Pennsylvania will once again contribute in 2019 to civil legal aid through the IOLTA portion of our annual licensing fee, but it is the volunteer efforts--whether in direct representation of clients or further financial support beyond that mandatory payment--that most greatly impact those in need. The Pennsylvania Legal Aid Network, in partnership with our regional legal aid providers and a network of specialty legal aid programs, helps provide the framework and structure for legal assistance for the poor. *Pro Bono* attorneys, encouraged by the Pennsylvania Bar Association and local bars to fulfill their aspirational duty under Rule 6.1 to "render public interest legal service," provide time and financial contributions to help fuel the important work of representing those clients who have critical needs but cannot afford to retain private counsel. Our law schools inculcate the values of *pro bono* service in the next generation of Pennsylvania lawyers through law school legal aid clinics.

Together with Charles Eppolito, III, President of the Pennsylvania Bar Association, I call on each of the nearly 70,000 attorneys registered in the Commonwealth to make a personal commitment to provide whatever pro bono service you can through direct representation to the poor and financial support of our legal aid programs. Please take a few moments to reflect on the meaning of Rule 6.1, to access palawhelp.org, and to register with paprobono.net to review the range of opportunities there are for *pro bono* service.

Thank you for your consideration, and again, I extend my deep appreciation for those of you who already do so much.


Thomas G. Saylor
Chief Justice of Pennsylvania