



National Center *for*
Access to Justice

AT FORDHAM LAW SCHOOL

**Experts' Letters of Recommendation
Supporting the Pro Bono Publico Award 2017
to the Justice Index Team**

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Judge Lisa Foster (Ret.)
2422 Tracy Place N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20008

February 28, 2017

Dear Awards Committee Members,

I am writing to support the nomination for the Pro Bono Publico Award of the law firms of Kirkland & Ellis, Morgan Lewis Bockius, O'Melveny & Myers, Patterson Belknap, Skadden Arps, and Simpson Thacher; the law departments of Deloitte, General Electric, Pfizer, and UBS; and the Benjamin N. Cardozo, Fordham University, and University of Pennsylvania law schools in recognition their collaborative work in creating the Justice Index, www.justiceindex.org.

Recognition of these entities by the American Bar Association is well deserved. The amount of work, the degree of coordination, the particular importance of the Justice Index— all of these factors are unprecedented and extraordinary. A cooperative undertaking that brought together corporations, law firms, and law schools in service of access to justice is both unusual and invaluable. The Justice Index project is a model for the effective engagement of diverse institutions in the task of carrying out national research – pro bono – to support the positive transformation of our justice system.

The Justice Index is a remarkable innovation -- a 5000 data-point on-line presentation of findings on the presence and absence of critically important policies for assuring access to justice in the state justice systems in each of the 50 states, Washington, DC, and Puerto Rico. To cite just one finding contained in the Justice Index, it is the sole resource in this country offering a comprehensive count of the number of civil legal aid lawyers serving the poor in our states. The Justice Index also tracks more than 100 other dimensions of access to justice in the states, including, for example, the presence (or absence) of codes of judicial conduct that authorize judges to take concrete steps to help litigants who are self-represented, the commitment of state justice systems to using certified interpreters, the prohibition on charging deaf litigants a fee for the provision of a sign-language interpreter, the presence or absence of a guarantee of civil legal representation for parents facing allegations of child neglect, the authorization that allows attorneys to deliver unbundled legal services. These examples are just a few of the “indicators” in the Justice Index, but their inclusion along with others in the state-by-state ranking system contained in the Justice Index, is the “raw data” that positions the Justice Index to perform its constant and vital function of providing judges, legislators, advocates and policy makers with information and inspiration to improve their state justice systems.

My praise for the Justice Index is informed by my service both as Director of the Office on Access to Justice in the United States Department of Justice and as a state court judge. In both roles, I recognized the enormous need for and worked to promote new discoveries, new resources, new technologies, new policy models, and new research strategies that together can make a real and meaningful difference in reducing the justice gap. That is precisely what the Justice Index embodies. In an era of fiscal austerity in state government, we all appreciate the necessity of doing more with less and of uncovering hidden reserves of volunteer talent, increased efficiency, and hidden creativity. As a retired judge, I particularly appreciate the commitment that the state judiciary has made to finding multiple ways to assure that every litigant in our state courts will receive meaningful legal assistance. The Justice Index provides courts with a concise and accurate way to measure themselves against other states and to target needed reforms.

The Justice Index reflects all of these important themes. It brings new resources to the field: multiple diverse law firms, corporations, and law schools, all performing their assigned complex research tasks pro bono. It brings new technologies to our field – new software, new data analytics, new data visualizations, new data indexing – providing justice system reformers with some of the same tools long available in the corporate sector. It features new policy models - the heart of the Justice Index - selected practices that are increasingly being adopted in state justice systems as intended means of responding to litigants' unmet legal needs. Many of these models have not yet been tested through evaluative research, but the Justice Index also performs important functions to advance that critical research. It provides a geographical roadmap that provides researchers with the critical data they need when planning projects; it provides new data sets that researchers can use to compare and correlate with findings contained in other data sets; and it offers the promise of highlighting for each of the selected policy models the evaluative research findings that will, over time, become sufficient to establish, based on data, whether a particular model is truly a best practice.

Conferring the ABA Pro Bono Publico Award on the nominee firms will allow the ABA and the bar as a whole to take appropriate ownership of the Justice Index as an achievement in which the bar, itself, has been integrally involved. Simply put, the Justice Index would not exist without the commitment of all of the nominee firms, corporations and law schools and the dozens of individual lawyers and law students they encouraged to participate.

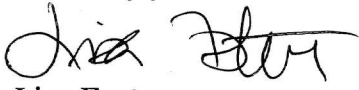
In closing, I would note that this work is increasingly being recognized:

- *What to Do With Your Bonus*, The American Lawyer (January 2016) (“There is just one legal aid lawyer for every 8,893 low-income Americans who qualify for legal aid, according to the Justice Index”).
- *White House Legal Aid Interagency Roundtable: Civil Legal Aid Research Workshop Report*, U.S. Department of Justice, Office for Access to Justice (February 2016)(describing Justice Index among leading research initiatives on access to justice in state justice systems)

- *Justice Moves Slowly For Those Who Need Interpreters*, ABA Journal (March 1, 2016)(citing Justice Index findings as to particular states that trail others in assuring provision of interpreting services to litigants).
- *Report: Language Access in State Courts*, U.S. Department of Justice Civil Rights Division (September 2016)(citing Justice Index findings as confirming a trend in which state justice systems are prioritizing language assistance services in state courts)

Accordingly, I strongly recommend that the ABA honor this exemplary team of nominees with the Pro Bono Publico Award. Please let me know if any additional information would be helpful.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lisa Foster", written in a cursive style.

Lisa Foster

Hon. Jonathan Lippman
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March 3, 2017

Awards Committee
Pro Bono Publico Award
American Bar Association
321 North Clark Street
Chicago, IL 60654

Dear Members of the Awards Committee:

I am writing in support of the Pro Bono Publico Award Nomination of Deloitte, GE, Kirkland & Ellis, Morgan Lewis Bockius, O'Melveny & Myers, Patterson Belknap, Pfizer, Skadden Arps, Simpson Thacher, UBS, the Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law, Fordham School of Law, and University of Pennsylvania School of Law in recognition of the important work done by these organizations to create the Justice Index, www.justiceindex.org. The Justice Index is the newly created resource maintained by the National Center for Access to Justice at Fordham Law School that is helping our state justice systems to satisfy previously unmet legal needs and to extend civil legal assistance to underserved segments of the population.

Through my own experience as Chief Judge in New York, I have seen that for far too long far too many litigants have been far too vulnerable in civil cases concerning the most basic necessities of life. These are individuals and their families who are unable to pay for a lawyer or to access free legal help – people facing the loss of their homes, suffering persecution by predatory lenders, seeking to keep custody of their children or escape the abuse of a family member, or looking to protect their very subsistence. Indeed, all who care about justice in our country must work to shift this landscape. State judiciaries are uniquely positioned by their constitutional and societal role to advocate for access to justice and to meet the challenges. The organized bar, under the leadership of the American Bar Association, also must and indeed it does perform a critical role, including by marshalling support for civil legal aid, supporting the expansion of pro bono services, and championing the justice-serving function of our courts. Access to justice must no longer be an afterthought for anyone, but rather should be recognized throughout the country as the fundamental right of every individual in a civilized society.

What I found through our own court's work in New York and through my work as a chief judge nationally with the Conference of Chief Justices, the Legal Services Corporation, the law school deans, the many leaders of the bar and of the corporate sector, and many additional civic

leaders and members of the public across our country, is that we can make real and definite progress to expand access to justice in our society. We can make this progress by turning over every stone to draw on all of the potential ideas and resources in our country that can make a difference. We need to strengthen and expand the civil legal aid bar, encourage our judges and clerks to be proactive in protecting due process in the courtroom, support the expanded use of interpreters and translators in the courts, encourage the production of court documents in plain English, incorporate technology in ways that simplify the challenges of litigation, and pursue additional innovative ideas and creative policy models that have the potential to ameliorate the injustice that we in the courts see on a daily basis. Indeed, we must also help our society to see the value in, and then establish, a civil right to counsel in matters involving basic human needs. In all these efforts, we must look to our law firms, corporations, law schools and other leading institutions in society to develop and deepen their commitments to improving our justice system.

The nominees, through their work in building the Justice Index, have created an extraordinary resource that is helping in all these ways to accomplish this mission of expanding access to justice in our country. This new resource, created with the National Center for Access to Justice by the nominee pro bono law firms, in house departments, and law schools, uniquely advances and reinforces the justice system reform efforts of the judiciary and the bar and our other stakeholders. The Justice Index gathers and presents data on the number of civil legal aid lawyers in each state, the best policies for assisting self-represented litigants (including civil right to counsel in eviction, guardianship and neglect proceedings), the best policies for assisting people with limited English proficiency, and the best policies for assisting people with disabilities. In so doing, it not only makes all these smart policies highly visible, but it also scores and ranks the states on the degree to which they have taken up the policies. The Justice Index criteria support the goals established in *Reaffirming the Commitment to Meaningful Access to Justice for All*, a formal resolution published in August 2015 by the non-partisan Conference of Chief Judges and Chief Court Administrators that underlines the importance of pushing forward on all fronts to expand access to justice in the state courts.

The result is a project that is unprecedented in nature and effect. With more than 100 policies included, 5000 data points, and several thousand citations, the scope and depth of this new data-intensive map of our access to justice landscape is extraordinary. Moreover, because the policies are made visible, they can be easily replicated. And, because the states are scored and ranked, the public officials and the many committed reformers in the states not only have new incentives to achieve reform, but also have new evidence that supports reform. Additionally, the Justice Index is also supporting a new domestic and global movement that is carrying out research in support of justice system reform: with its extensive data sets and its visual depiction of the locations where the best policies are present, or absent, the Justice Index serves as an invaluable tool for researchers who are using it to target particular jurisdictions for study, to compare and correlate its data with other data sets, and to provide a framework that over time will be the go-to source for performance evaluative research findings on best practices for access to justice. Finally, like other well-constructed indexing systems, the Justice Index helps to make our complicated system more understandable to one and all.

LATHAM & WATKINS LLP

In my work in recent years, I have had the opportunity to witness first-hand the extraordinary efforts of members of the private bar to carry out pro bono initiatives, and I have appreciated deeply the role of the organized bar, most particularly the American Bar Association, in encouraging a greater commitment of pro bono. The Pro Bono Publico Award performs a particularly important function in this regard by conferring recognition on individuals and organizations who make us all proud through their intense and demonstrated commitment to helping individuals in need. The team that built the Justice Index is particularly worthy of this recognition. I know personally how unusual and special it is for so many firms, corporate attorneys, and law schools – so many institutions and people – to all pull together on a huge project that offers such important support to our combined efforts within the judiciary and the bar to strengthen our American justice system so that it can truly deliver on the promise of justice for all.

We have before us an opportunity to honor these firms, corporations and schools for their extraordinary effort and for the extraordinary product that they have produced. I urge the Committee to bestow the Pro Bono Publico Award on these nominees.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jonathan Lippman /et".

Hon. Jonathan Lippman
of LATHAM & WATKINS LLP

By email to abaprobono@americanbar.org

March 2, 2017

Awards Committee
Pro Bono Publico Award
American Bar Association
321 North Clark Street
Chicago, IL 60654

Dear Members of the Awards Committee:

I write in support of the nomination of Deloitte, GE, Kirkland & Ellis, Morgan Lewis Bockius, O'Melveny & Myers, Patterson Belknap, Pfizer, Skadden Arps, Simpson Thacher, UBS, the Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law, the University of Pennsylvania School of Law, and the Fordham School of Law for the Pro Bono Publico Award in recognition of the important work done by these organizations to create the Justice Index, www.justiceindex.org. The Justice Index, maintained by the National Center for Access to Justice at Fordham Law School, is a new resource that aids state justice systems in satisfying previously unmet legal needs and extending civil legal assistance to underserved segments of the population.

My own research has focused on understanding what many call the justice gap – the global and domestic phenomenon in which millions of people do not obtain assistance with their civil legal needs even though their lives may be affected in profound ways when these needs go unaddressed. As the American Bar Association understands, civil legal problems routinely and often tragically cause large numbers of people to lose their homes, sacrifice their right to custody of their children, compromise their medical care and their basic health, and even put at risk their physical and psychological security.

Research exploring the justice gap has helped us to develop a more complete picture of the scope and depth of people's unmet legal needs. Researchers have shown that millions of people with civil legal problems remain startlingly unaware that their problems are amenable to legal solution. Researchers have also traced the outlines of the United States' justice system infrastructure, which includes traditional civil legal services representation and is increasingly supplemented by innovative approaches to "self-representation" that are potentially helpful to those who are proceeding in the justice system without traditional legal assistance. These new models, present to varying degree across the country, include "self-help centers" in courts, "engaged but neutral" roles for judges, "unbundling" models for counsel, and many additional policies and practices. Few of these models have yet been rigorously studied, but the social science community is increasingly examining them. Over the next few years, many of these models will be evaluated empirically.

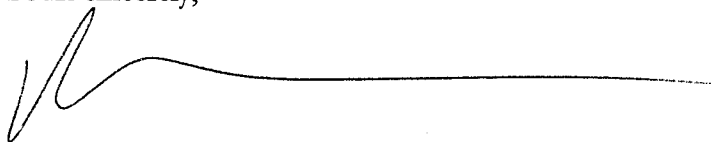
Against this backdrop of growing policy and research interest, the Justice Index (JI) stands out for a number of reasons. First, JI organizes and sorts by geographical location a range of traditional and innovative policy models perceived by experts to be important, thereby making these models easy to recognize, understand, and reproduce. Second, by ranking states on an index summarizing their adoption of policies considered “best practices,” JI creates incentives for government officials across the country to support the replication of these best practices. Third, and of particular importance to social scientists and empirical researchers generally, JI provides data for use in research -- specifically, more than 112 indicators and 5000 data points, backed by 2500 citations -- that will permit deeper understanding of state justice systems through correlation of JI information with information from other sources, such as information about the distribution of wealth, disability, language facility, state budgetary resources, and more. Fourth, by charting the existing infrastructure for access to justice, the Justice Index identifies existing policies and practices for further investigation, facilitating the evaluative research studies that are so urgently needed to understand what works, for whom, at what costs, with what benefits. Fifth, the Justice Index intends, over time, to incorporate into its framework the findings of that evaluation research so that, as a community, we can define and document the most effective policies for assuring access to justice.

In addition to its contributions to research and practice, the Justice Index is an important and inspiring illustration of how pro bono efforts can be coordinated to produce extraordinary results. The Justice Index web site describes the work done by the nominees, <http://justiceindex.org/about-the-justice-index/>. The Justice Index initiative effectively demonstrates that a very large number of volunteers can be mobilized in unprecedented and highly coordinated ways to respond to the justice gap. As a social scientist, I am acutely aware of the difficulties in generating funding to support research of this nature, and therefore I find it especially heartening to see that this 52-jurisdiction research project was staffed by volunteers. Today, facts and research have arguably become more important than ever, and the service of these volunteers in producing facts about our justice system infrastructure is invaluable for all who are concerned about the justice gap. We all benefit from the commitment of pro bono resources that brings essential facts to light and supports important social science research that can help make our justice system more fair and more accessible for those who are most vulnerable.

It is with great admiration and respect for this work that I submit my whole-hearted support for this nomination. The Justice Index is helping our state justice systems satisfy previously unmet legal needs and extend civil legal assistance to underserved segments of the population. I hope that the American Bar Association will recognize the crucial importance of the pro bono services that have made this result possible.

If there are any questions or any further information that I can provide, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,



Rebecca L. Sandefur
Faculty Fellow, American Bar Foundation
Associate Professor of Sociology and Law, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

March 2, 2017

Awards Committee
Pro Bono Publico Award
American Bar Association
321 North Clark Street
Chicago, IL 60654

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Dear Members of the Awards Committee:

I am writing in support of the Pro Bono Publico Award Nomination of Deloitte, GE, Kirkland & Ellis, Morgan Lewis Bockius, O'Melveny & Myers, Patterson Belknap, Pfizer, Skadden Arps, Simpson Thacher, UBS, the Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law, the Fordham Law School, and the University of Pennsylvania Law School in recognition of the extraordinary work done by these organizations to create the Justice Index, www.justiceindex.org. The Justice Index is the online resource maintained by the National Center for Access to Justice at Fordham Law School that helps state justice systems identify ways to extend civil legal assistance to underserved segments of the population. I believe these nominees as a group deserve to receive a Pro Bono Publico Award.

I. The Challenge We Face As A Society

"The justice gap" is the difference between the level of civil legal assistance available and the level necessary to meet the needs of low-income individuals and families in civil legal matters. According to the Legal Services Corporation's 2009 report *Documenting the Justice Gap in America*, 50% of those who seek legal assistance from LSC grantee programs are turned away because of the lack of adequate resources. LSC grantee programs served nearly 1.9 million low-income persons in 2015, but many more requested assistance and were unable to obtain it because of inadequate resources.

II. The Justice Index

Overview.

The Justice Index is an important, data-intensive resource that can help to narrow the justice gap. By tracking selected best policies for assuring access to justice in the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico, the Justice Index

illuminates both the scope of the problem and innovative models that are being tested across the country to solve it. The Justice Index also ranks jurisdictions based on their implementation of these models, thereby creating carrot-and-stick incentives that encourage officials to replicate the best models. As the Justice Index website explains,

The Justice Index relies on data to improve state justice systems. It compares states' performance overall, based on findings on 112 indicators grouped in four categories, to reveal a vivid picture of the systems in place to assure access to justice in our country. With clear, concise, and public findings, the Justice Index allows:

- Judges, administrators, and advocates to see where their efforts do the most good at the lowest cost
- The public to learn about justice system performance and demand accountability
- Researchers to rely on patterns to conduct investigations that identify better practices
- Everyone to press for adoption of selected best practices that have been proven to work or recommended by experts.

<http://justiceindex.org/our-vision>.

Recognition and Impact.

Individuals and institutions concerned about access to justice are using the new resource of the Justice Index to help expand access to justice to those in need:

- Legal Services Corporation – The Legal Services Corporation invited presentations of the Justice Index to enable our Board of Directors and senior management to better make the case for expanding access to justice. As LSC's President, I consider the *Justice Index* a valuable model of how our community can use data to highlight the need for civil legal aid. Indeed, the Justice Index provides the only comprehensive count of civil legal aid lawyers in the United States (relying in part on data provided to the Justice Index by LSC), a figure that has been cited in articles urging expansion if the number of civil legal aid lawyers. See, e.g., *What to Do with Your Bonus*, The American Lawyer (January 2016) explaining, "There is just one legal aid lawyer for every 8,893 low-income Americans who qualify for legal aid, according to the Justice Index." LSC has also relied on Justice Index findings in LSC's own submissions to Congress in 2014 and 2016 setting forth the Corporation's budget requests in those years.

- Department of Justice – The U.S. Department of Justice Civil Rights Division has relied on the Justice Index’s findings and data visualizations to demonstrate that state courts are prioritizing language assistance services for people with limited English proficiency. See *Report: Language Access in State Courts (Sept. 2016)*. US DOJ’s Civil Rights Division has also featured the Justice Index as a tool that can help to increase language access in the courts. See <https://www.justice.gov/opa/blog/providing-language-access-courts-working-together-ensure-justice>. DOJ’s Office on Access to Justice has highlighted the Justice Index to explain to agency officials the power of justice system indexing as a means of supporting access to justice in the state courts. <https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/249776.pdf>.
- State Court Systems – In Oklahoma, the Justice Index findings have been cited in the press both to describe to readers the very low number of civil legal aid attorneys in the state and to highlight the very low overall ranking of Oklahoma (as compared to other states) in providing access to justice. See *For Thousands, Civil Courts are Out of Reach*, Oklahoma Watch <http://oklahomawatch.org/2016/09/20/for-thousands-civil-justice-is-out-of-reach>. In Massachusetts, court officials have relied on the Justice Index as part of planning processes that aim to expand access to justice in the state. See *Pursuing the Metrics of the Justice Index in Access to Justice Initiatives in the Trial Court in 2009-2014*, <http://www.mass.gov/courts/docs/access-to-justice-report-0614.pdf>.
- Additional press coverage – The Justice Index has been widely covered in other articles in the press. <http://justiceindex.org/category/news/>
- Chief Justices’ Statements – Chief Justices from Connecticut, Hawaii and Massachusetts, along with a Justice of the Illinois Court (formerly the Chief Justice), have offered statements describing the importance of the Justice Index as a resource that helps to expand access to justice in the state courts. <http://ncforaj.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/PRESS-RELEASE-Justice-Index-2016-5-11-161.pdf>.
- Expert Statements – Experts at the American Bar Association, Legal Services New York City, the National Legal Aid & Defender Association, New York Center for Law & Justice, and Voices for Civil Justice have also described the importance of the Justice Index. <http://ncforaj.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/Justice-Index-Experts-Comment-3-3-14.pdf>.

Broader implications.

The *Justice Index* is increasing awareness among important leaders and institutions of the power of data and technology to improve state justice systems through the adoption of new approaches that help meet the needs of low income litigants. Limited funding has impeded our sector's ability to use big data in ways that other communities have long considered important. In the business world, international corporations rely on data and data analytics to evaluate potential markets, manage inventory, administer staff, allocate their resources, and maximize their impact. The *Justice Index*, through reliance on the pro bono services of multiple organizations, is making those same tools available to help our communities increase access to justice for those who need it most.

III. The Pro Bono Accomplishment of the Nominees

The Justice Index could not have been created without the painstaking and comprehensive research that underlies its rankings and that is presented on the site itself. That research and its presentation are the product of a very large pro bono effort involving multiple organizations and literally dozens of attorneys, law students, and other people.

The pro bono collaboration that created the Justice Index is very unusual. In two multi-year rounds of activity culminating the publication of the Justice Index online in May 2016, the Justice Index pro bono effort has drawn on the resources of dozens of people in six law firms, three corporations, and two law schools. This is an effort that has produced a very valuable product – a new resource for the access to justice community – that is already having a substantial impact. The Justice Index shows what can happen when law firms, corporations, and law schools pool their people, their resources, and their expertise to achieve a result none could accomplish alone.

I think it would be useful for the American Bar Association to recognize this kind of unusual, cooperative, cross-organizational effort. I wholeheartedly support the nomination. I encourage the ABA to honor the thirteen organizations that participated in creating the Justice Index with the Pro Bono Publico Award.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "James J. Sandman".

James J. Sandman
President



Awards Committee
Pro Bono Publico Award
American Bar Association
321 North Clark Street
Chicago, IL 60654

March 3, 2017

Dear Members of the Awards Committee:

I am writing in support of the Pro Bono Publico Award Nomination recognizing the organizations who undertook the important work of creating the Justice Index, www.justiceindex.org. The organizations are: Deloitte, GE, Kirkland & Ellis, Morgan Lewis Bockius, O'Melveny & Myers, Patterson Belknap, Pfizer, Skadden Arps, Simpson Thacher, UBS, the Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law, Fordham School of Law, and University of Pennsylvania School of Law. The Justice Index is the newly created resource maintained by the National Center for Access to Justice at Fordham Law School that is helping our state justice systems to satisfy previously unmet legal needs and to extend civil legal assistance to underserved segments of the population.

I currently serve as President and Chief Executive Officer of the National Legal Aid & Defender Association (NLADA). From that perspective, as well as my earlier experiences as an attorney, and then Director of the Public Defender Service for the District of Columbia (PDS), as a consultant on collaborative projects with the United States Department of Justice (USDJ) and with local government entities and legal aid programs, and as a lecturer and teacher at Harvard Law School, I have worked to develop a full understanding of the scope of the justice system crisis we face. As Americans, we are proud of many aspects of our justice system, certainly grateful for its ambitious ideals, and for the extraordinary people who help to secure its role as a bulwark of our democracy. But, we are all mindful also of its limitations, especially the challenges and barriers that make it so difficult for millions of people every year to obtain even basic access to the system.

I know that as a society we can do better, and it is with this aspiration in mind that I so value the work that the nominee organizations have done with the National Center for Access to Justice at Fordham Law School in building the Justice Index. The Justice Index relies on data and technology to track the presence and absence in the 50 states, Puerto Rico, and Washington, D.C., of many of the most critically significant policy models that are helping people across the country to secure access to justice. It provides a reliable count of the number of civil legal aid lawyers in the states and across the country. It also tracks the extent to which the states have adopted best policies to assist litigants who do not have access to lawyers, who are unable to speak English with proficiency, and/or who have physical or emotional disabilities. Other policies it tracks include: codes of judicial conduct that authorize judges to proactively assist litigants without counsel; state rules that call for the use of certified interpreters in civil and criminal proceedings; commitments made by courts to produce form documents in languages other than English; notice requirements that instruct litigants on how (and to

whom) to report courthouse violations of the Americans with Disabilities Act; laws establishing civil rights to counsel in child neglect cases, guardianship cases and eviction cases, and much more in its 100+ indicators.

At NLADA, we celebrate this project not only because it is a collection of information we care about, but also because it is a resource for reform. The Justice Index equips legal aid programs, bar associations, the judiciary, and other stakeholders with data and findings that are being used to justify improved policies. And, it equips researchers with a map of the policy landscape that fosters planning of future research, and that serves as a framework for organizing all the evaluative data that is generated about whether the selected policy models are truly effective in accomplishing their claimed goal of increasing access to justice. The Justice Index criteria are closely aligned with the goals for access to justice reform that have been identified and established by the non-partisan Conference of Chief Judges and Chief Court Administrators in their August 2015 resolution, *Reaffirming the Commitment to Meaningful Access to Justice for All*. The Justice Index criteria also reinforce the efforts of the *Justice for All Initiative* in which NLADA is helping to encourage courts and extended networks of justice system stakeholders in selected states to move forward with a comprehensive agenda for expanding access to justice.

Finally, and importantly for the Awards Committee's consideration, we applaud the strength of this pro bono model. NLADA works with pro bono firms across the country, and we are thrilled to have seen this project go forward with its involvement of attorneys, staff and students from six law firms, four corporations, and three law schools. We deeply appreciate that a pro bono commitment to traditional legal representation is and will remain essential as a direct response to the otherwise unmet legal needs of individuals and families. But, we also value projects that strategically move the entire field forward. We all realize that the justice sector has historically not had the benefit of the investment in data and data analytics that has made so great a difference for private actors in the corporate sector. At NLADA we are committed to drawing on the power of the data revolution to support justice system reform and we are excited to see this coordination of pro bono talent that has been sharply focused on creating this data-intensive resource.

We value NLADA's close partnership with the American Bar Association through the years on so many levels to increase access to justice. I am delighted to offer to the ABA my highest recommendation in support of the nomination for the Pro Bono Publico Award of the team created the Justice Index.

Very truly yours,



Jo-Ann Wallace
President & CEO
National Legal Aid & Defender Association