

**ASSEMBLY  
ILLINOIS STATE BAR ASSOCIATION  
June 19, 2020**

**Resolution of the Assembly of the Illinois State Bar Association**

**WHEREAS**, the Association joins the nation in mourning the slaying of George Floyd, an African American male citizen, by an officer of the Minneapolis Police Department, and further acknowledges and mourns the treatment of persons of color by law enforcement agencies across the country; and

**WHEREAS**, the Association further recognizes that the unequal and discriminatory treatment of persons of color fundamentally undermines the rule of law in the nation and in our communities; and

**WHEREAS**, the Association acknowledges that as the premier representative of the bar in the State of Illinois, with members from every community in the State, it has particular responsibilities to the profession and to the public and aspires to advance and uphold the highest standards of justice in our communities; and

**WHEREAS**, the Association and its members recognize and embrace the mutuality of relationships among inclusion, community growth and development, economic and social equity, equal justice, and the rule of law; and

**WHEREAS**, the Association and its members affirmatively have worked to break down barriers between persons within and outside of the profession, within and across communities of every sort in our State, through the development of education for the profession, initiation and support of legislation for the public in areas of civil and human rights, and organizational action to support inclusion, diversity, and progress, and continues to recognize and accept a critical role in articulating and advancing the common good in the State of Illinois; and

**WHEREAS** the members of the Association are skilled in substantive areas of the law and undertake to continuously advance professionalism, service to the public, and leadership in the commonwealth in all its aspects;

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Illinois State Bar Association, through its Assembly and related governance structures, undertake an affirmative and Association-wide program, directed toward the goals of the examination of the areas of law in which its members are competent across the State with the purposes of:

- (i) identifying areas in which the structures of the legal system (not limited to those related to the administration of criminal justice) fail to support and promote equal justice and full equity;
- (ii) advancing policy and legislative solutions across substantive areas which will serve to correct imbalances and support the achievement of equal justice and full equity;
- (iii) examining the structures of the profession to address areas in which those structures require reimagination, reformulation, and/or reformation both to:
  - (a) eliminate barriers to full inclusion; and to
  - (b) create affirmative approaches to professional responsibility for the advancement of equity, justice, and inclusion, and the redress of issues in our communities and legal system which have resulted in, or contributed to, the marginalization of members or segments of those communities whether through color, under-representation, vulnerabilities, or differences.

**FURTHER**, be it resolved that the Association will take actions including, but not limited to, the following:

- (i) The prompt establishment and support of an organized structure, initially in the form of a steering committee constituted with representatives of constituent groups of the Diversity Leadership Council and other members representative of the diverse membership and capabilities of the Association (including the Young Lawyers Division) appropriate to the purposes hereof and appointed by the officers of the Association to provide guidance, coordination, development of prioritization, and accountability of the councils, committees, and other Association structures to advance the above purposes, with regular reporting requirements to the officers, Assembly, and Board of Governors;
- (ii) Dedication of a staff member or members to support the purposes and initiatives that follow;
- (iii) Declaration of a consensus and mandate on the part of the Association for each substantive law council, service committee, or other entity with competence to examine over the course of this bar year the areas of law and policy with which it deals, with the aim of identifying factors that need to be addressed to support the Association's commitment to equal justice and social equity as critical pillars of the rule of law, which will be accompanied by:
  - (a) intersectional dialogue at the Midyear and Annual meetings;
  - (b) dedication of at least one council or committee meeting fully to the council or committee's examination and proposals;
  - (c) reports to the membership and the committee established hereunder; and
  - (d) the creation of Association-supported legislative and policy programs to address the identified areas;
- (iv) Provide through electronic and in-person means a space or spaces for dialogue around the purposes articulated in this resolution, a principal of which will be the safety of all opinions proffered in good faith;
- (v) Encourage the participation of members in initiatives in their own communities consonant with the aims of this resolution, including but not limited to:
  - (a) the examination of law enforcement and criminal justice reforms;
  - (b) conversations with and support of law enforcement and criminal justice agencies in their efforts to address issues of discrimination; and
  - (c) the extension of social, human, and health services and economic empowerment and justice;
- (vi) Direct and encourage interaction and intentional engagement between the Association and regional, substantively oriented, and affinity bar associations concerning the purposes and ends of this resolution, utilizing the strengths of the Association in support of such engagement;
- (vii) Provide a budgetary line item of support for the above activities sufficient for their purposes; and
- (viii) Develop and support such other initiatives, proposals, and activities as are consistent with the purposes of this resolution.

ADOPTED this 19th day of June, 2020.