Release: Immediate

Contact: Name of Local Bar President

Phone:

 **RECOGNIZES PRO BONO WEEK WITH PROCLAMATION, [event]**

The \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ adopted a Proclamation officially declaring Pro Bono Week in [County], October 25-31, 2020. [Example: “Providing access to justice for those who cannot afford it levels the playing field. When we improve access to the state’s courts we are actually helping Illinois families help themselves,” (local bar president) said.]

The situation is particularly acute as increasing numbers of the poor and disadvantaged are turning to legal aid programs because they have nowhere else to go. The right to counsel in civil cases is necessary to make equal justice under law a reality. But for many citizens with limited means, the only reality is a pressing legal problem that goes unresolved.

The types of unresolved civil legal problems include: women who are seeking protection from abuse, parents trying to obtain child support or custody of their children, families who are facing unlawful eviction or foreclosure that could leave them homeless, and individuals who have lost their jobs and need unemployment benefits.

During Pro Bono Week, we recognize lawyers in each of the state’s 24 judicial circuits who participate in events such as: handling a legal matter for a person of limited means without charge; conducting free legal clinics offering advice and counsel in areas such as elder and family law; discussing with community and civic groups the critical need for funding for existing legal services, and recruiting additional lawyers to volunteer to provide pro bono (free) service to those in need who cannot afford an attorney.

The Proclamation [and any local special event] emphasize the support given by the roughly 28,000 members of the Illinois State Bar Association, and the [number of members], Bar Association. The lawyers of these groups remain dedicated to improving the administration of justice and increasing public understanding and respect for the law.