



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

April 18, 2006

**Resolution
In Support of Allowing the
Judicial Council of the Supreme Court of Louisiana
To Make Recommendations Regarding Court Structure or Consolidation**

WHEREAS, the New Orleans Bar Association is the largest voluntary bar association in the state of Louisiana, consisting of over two thousand members who live and practice in the New Orleans area; the primary purpose or mission of the New Orleans Bar Association is to maintain and promote the administration of justice, and to promote and conserve the honor, dignity and efficiency of the courts;

WHEREAS, various bills have been introduced in the current regular session of the Louisiana Legislature which would consolidate the Civil, Criminal and Juvenile Courts for the Parish of Orleans, and the implementation of these proposed laws may adversely affect the administration of justice and the access to justice;

WHEREAS, the Judicial Council of the Supreme Court of Louisiana is the official state resource center where ideas for simplifying and expediting judicial procedures and correcting shortcomings in the judicial system are studied and recommendations made;

WHEREAS, by virtue of the Louisiana Legislature's special session, Act 16 (former SB 42) was adopted which statutorily charged the Judicial Council to undertake review of the present structure of the district and local courts both in Orleans Parish and statewide, including the need to reduce judgeships and consolidate court functions, particularly in light of post-Hurricane Katrina circumstances; further to make recommendations thereon to the Louisiana Legislature by March 1, 2007;

WHEREAS, there is no urgency that such legislation be adopted during the current legislative session, since under the Louisiana state constitution the earliest any such consolidation of the courts or abolishment of judgeships could occur would be January, 2009;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, that the New Orleans Bar Association strongly urges that the Judicial Council of the Supreme Court of Louisiana, is the appropriate body to evaluate the issue of court consolidation and to formulate recommendations concerning the structure, function and operation of the courts;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the New Orleans Bar Association urges the members of the Louisiana Legislature to withhold consideration or adoption of the current court consolidation bills pending the anticipated review and report on this matter by the Judicial Council of the Supreme Court of Louisiana, which is scheduled to be completed and forwarded to the Louisiana Legislature not later than March 1, 2007.

Respectfully submitted,

Carmelite M. Bertaut
President