RESOLUTION

Whereas, the New Jersey Legislature considered a bill earlier this year that would increase a variety of court filing fees to raise funding for enhancements to the Judiciary information technology systems and to support legal services for the poor, both of which have traditionally been funded through the state treasury; and

Whereas, private litigants who use the court system will bear the burden of the increased fees in order to gain access to justice; and

Whereas, the New Jersey State Bar Association recognizes that, in this economic climate, such increases in fees could prevent individuals from being able to resolve their disputes through the court system; and

Whereas, the court system was established by the New Jersey Constitution for the benefit of all New Jersey citizens, not just those who could afford to avail themselves its services; and

Whereas, the New Jersey State Bar Association has a long history of supporting Legal Services of New Jersey and of calling on the State to fully fund, from the general treasury, the assistance provided by Legal Services of New Jersey to indigent New Jersey citizens looking to address their grievances through the court system; and

Whereas, the New Jersey State Bar Association opposes an increase in filing fees because we have received no compelling information as to the justification or the amount of the proposed fee increases, which ultimately will place the cost and burden of upgrading the court system and providing legal assistance to indigent New Jersey citizens on users of the courts;

Now, therefore, let it be resolved, that the New Jersey State Bar Association calls upon the Executive, Legislative and Judicial branches of government to fund the judiciary and Legal Services of New Jersey from the general treasury.

And, let it be further resolved, that a copy of this resolution shall be distributed to the Governor, State Legislative leaders of both parties, and the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of New Jersey forthwith.