

THE STATE OF IDAHO
SUPREME COURT



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: October 18, 2017

Idaho Pro Bono Week Recognizes Legal Community's Volunteer Contributions, Duty to Serve Idahoans in Need

Idaho attorneys donate 14,000 hours of free legal services in 2016

Boise, ID – Idaho Supreme Court Chief Justice Roger Burdick and the Idaho Pro Bono Commission proclaimed October 22-27 as Idaho Pro Bono Week, to honor the hundreds of attorneys who donate their time and expertise to ensure Idahoans with financial limitations have access to equal justice under the law.

Recognizing the need to provide free legal services for those lacking the resources to pay, the Idaho Pro Bono Commission was formed in 2008 by judges and lawyers across Idaho. Pro Bono Week is an extension of the commission's goal to increase pro bono participation of public and private sector attorneys while promoting the availability of free legal services to those in need and recognizing the volunteer contributions of the legal community as a whole.

In 2016, 741 volunteer attorneys worked on 548 cases, donating 14,330 hours of legal service time to Idahoans across the state through the [Idaho Volunteer Lawyers Program](#) (IVLP). In total, this free legal advice and counsel helped more than 1,300 individuals with services valued at nearly \$3,000,000. The IVLP, which serves as a resource both for those seeking legal help and attorneys looking for opportunities to provide support, also launched the [Pro Bono Opportunities website](#) to promote pro bono services across the state.

Former Idaho Supreme Court Chief Justice Jim Jones has been actively involved with pro bono work and the Idaho Pro Bono Commission during his 50 years of public and private practice, describing: "some of my most rewarding work has been in pro bono cases. You could see relief in their eyes when you said you would not charge for the work," continued Jones. "It is a good feeling. I experienced it again several months ago when a young man, a refugee from the Congo, teared up when I told him he would not have to pay for my work in recovering a car that had been improperly repossessed by a used car dealer."

This year, Idaho Supreme Court Justice Robyn Brody replaced Jones as Chair of the Pro Bono Commission, reflecting an ongoing commitment to pro bono service and Commission members.

"Attorneys across Idaho are providing expert counsel to those who need it most, but we can always do more," noted Justice Brody. "Pro bono week is a reminder to us all that there is an

ongoing need for our expertise and how much of an impact a few hours of our time can make to the lives of Idahoans and their families.”

Idahoans who are in need of legal assistance should contact the Idaho Volunteer Lawyers Program through its website at isb.idaho.gov/ilf/ivlp/ or by calling 208-334-4500; or Idaho Legal Aid Services by visiting its website at IdahoLegalAid.org or calling 208-336-8980.

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Contact:

Sara B. Thomas

Administrative Director of the Courts

Idaho Supreme Court, 451 W. State Street, Boise, Idaho

Phone: 208-334-2246

Email: sthomas@idcourts.net

Judiciary's Website: <http://www.isc.idaho.gov>

In the Supreme Court of the State of Idaho

IN RE: ADOPTION OF RESOLUTION

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ORDER

The Court having reviewed and approved the attached Resolution;

NOW THEREFORE IT IS ORDERED that the attached RESOLUTION be, and hereby is adopted.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that this Order shall be effective September 15, 2017.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that notice of this Order shall be published in one issue of The Advocate.

Dated this 15th day of September, 2017

By Order of the Supreme Court

R. S. Burdick
Roger S. Burdick, Chief Justice

ATTEST:

Karel A. Lehrman
Karel A. Lehrman, Clerk

STATE OF IDAHO
SUPREME COURT COURT OF APPEALS



Karel A. Lehrman
Clerk of the Court

Melanie Gagnepain
Chief Deputy Clerk

Supreme Court Building
P.O. Box 83720
Boise, Idaho 83720-0101
(208) 334-2210

RESOLUTION DESIGNATING IDAHO PRO BONO WEEK – 2017

WHEREAS, we are a nation dedicated to “liberty and justice for all,” and equal justice and the fair administration of justice are fundamental to our system of government; and

WHEREAS, the promise of equal justice under the law is not realized for individuals and families who have no meaningful access to the justice system because they are unable to pay for legal services; and

WHEREAS, this de facto denial of equal justice has an adverse impact on these individuals, families, and society as a whole, and works to erode public trust and confidence in our system of justice; and

WHEREAS, Idaho’s lawyers and judges strongly support the provision of free-of-charge legal services to those can’t afford them and have joined together in a collaborative effort to support pro bono services through the establishment of the Idaho Pro Bono Commission; and

WHEREAS, numerous public and private Idaho lawyers performed 14,330 hours of pro bono service in 2016 through the Idaho Volunteer Lawyers Program under the auspices of the Idaho State Bar and Idaho Law Foundation, while volunteer lawyers provided 1,134 hours of pro bono service in federal court cases; and

WHEREAS, Idaho Legal Aid Services is a statewide non-profit law firm dedicated to serving the civil legal needs of low income Idahoans through its seven regional offices and in 2016 its staff attorneys and attorney volunteers provided 18,994 hours of free legal services to thousands of Idahoans with legal problems such as domestic violence, wrongful evictions, illegal foreclosure, guardianships for abused or neglected children, Medicaid and Social Security problems of seniors, and unlawful discrimination; and

WHEREAS, the Idaho Law Foundation is sponsoring a statewide Access to Justice campaign to fund legal services for low-income residents and persons with disabilities, with the funding to be shared among the Idaho Volunteer Lawyers Program, Idaho Legal Aid Services, and Disability Rights Idaho; and

WHEREAS, many Idaho lawyers, acting upon their volition, generously provide many untallied hours of pro bono service to the citizens of our State without receiving recognition for their unpaid services; and

WHEREAS, during 2016 students at the University of Idaho College of Law performed 7,389 hours of pro bono service, under the supervision of lawyers and judges, as part of the College's distinctive pro bono program in which every student participates; and

WHEREAS, students and faculty at Concordia University School of Law contributed 2,303 hours of pro bono service in the 2016-17 academic year, and are committed to expanding access to justice through their pro bono service requirement, their on-site legal clinic, and providing pro bono training for Idaho lawyers; and

WHEREAS, October 22-28 has been designated as National Pro Bono Week; and

WHEREAS, the Idaho Pro Bono Commission, consisting of the state courts of Idaho, the United States Courts for the District and Bankruptcy Courts for the District of Idaho, the Idaho State Bar, the Idaho Law Foundation, and the University of Idaho College of Law, and Concordia University School of Law, recognizes the need to expand the delivery of legal services to economically disadvantaged persons and families;

NOW, THEREFORE, the Idaho Pro Bono Commission and its constituent members recognize Pro Bono Week, October 22-28, 2017, as a time for Idaho, along with the rest of the Nation, to honor the work of those who provide volunteer legal services, to address the need for civil legal assistance on matters of profound urgency, and to remind all attorneys of their responsibility to assist in meeting the legal profession's sacred commitment to equal justice under the law.

DATED this 15th day of September, 2017

By the IDAHO PRO BONO COMMISSION,
and its constituent members:
SUPREME COURT OF IDAHO, UNITED
STATES DISTRICT AND BANKRUPTCY
COURTS FOR THE DISTRICT OF IDAHO,
IDAHO STATE BAR, IDAHO LAW
FOUNDATION, UNIVERSITY OF IDAHO
COLLEGE OF LAW, AND CONCORDIA
UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF LAW.