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27 March 2013

SUMMARY OF COMMISSION MEETING

1. Old Business.

- a. **Access to Court Records/Expungement Brochures – Spanish Versions.** The brochures have been translated into Spanish, courtesy of Program Services and are posted online. Hard copies will also be made available.
- b. **Limited Scope and Fee Waiver Rule Proposals.** The limited scope rules and the fee waiver rule proposals remain pending before the full Rules Committee.
- c. **Pro Bono Practice Rule and Proposed Change to Code of Judicial Conduct.** The Attorney Subcommittee of the Rules Committee approved both the pro bono practice rule proposal and the proposed change to Rule 2.2 of the Code of Judicial Conduct endorsed by the Commission, and forwarded those items to the full Rules Committee for consideration.
- d. **Class Action Residual Funds Toolkit – Session at MSBA Conference.** The toolkit developed and endorsed by the Commission is now available online. The Commission will be providing a seminar on the toolkit at the MSBA Annual Meeting in Ocean City in June, 2013.
- e. **Venable Fellowship Renewal.** Venable has agreed to continue their commitment to fund for one additional year the fellowship at the House of Ruth created in collaboration with the Commission, the University of Baltimore School of Law and the Office of Vice President Biden.
- f. **Media Projects.** The Commission viewed a new video, *Defending a Small Claim*, based on a script approved by the Commission last year. Several modifications were suggested. The Commission also discussed how to publicize the videos.

- g. **Funding Bills.** The Commission continues to monitor two bills that will affect funding for civil legal services: House Bill 838/SB 60 and HB1303/SB809, both of which were pending at the time.
- h. **Commission Bills.** The Commission's proposed fee-shifting bill received an unfavorable report in the House and was subsequently withdrawn in the Senate. A second Commission bill will create a task force on a civil right to counsel. The bill passed both houses and is on target to pass.

2. New Business.

- a. **New Administrative Order.** The original administrative order creating the Commission will expire this month. Chief Judge Bell has a draft of a new administrative order before him.
- b. **Legal Help and Protections for Undocumented Persons Brochure.** The Committee approved a brochure about U- and T- visas which provide some protections for foreign-born victims of domestic violence and human trafficking.
- c. **Feedback on Proposed Interpreter Rule Change.** The Commission was asked by the Court Interpreter Committee to review a proposal for rules changes dealing with court interpreters. The Commission discussed the proposal and resolved to respond that it supports the proposal in principal.
- d. **2012 Annual Report.** The Commission reviewed and adopted the draft *2012 Annual Report*.
- e. **Awards.** The Commission decided to make the following awards:
 - i. **Robert M. Bell Judge of the Year Award:** Hon. Robert M. Bell, Chief Judge, Maryland Court of Appeals.
 - ii. **Judicial Branch Excellence Award:** Hon. Leslie D. Gradet and the staff of the Office of the Clerk, Court of Special Appeals.
 - iii. **Outstanding Program of the Year:** Community Mediation Maryland and Maryland's seventeen Community Mediation Centers.
 - iv. **Executive Branch Award:** Homeowners Preserving Equity (HOPE) Initiative, Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development

3. Committee Reports

- a. **Self-Represented Litigant Committee.** The Maryland House and Senate have supported full funding for the District Court Self-Help Center. The committee has been discussing the use of appeal bonds in housing cases.
- b. **Public Education Committee.** *Maryland Court System Lesson Plan.* The Committee presented a draft lesson plan developed by the committee for use in Maryland high schools. The lesson plan uses the *Maryland Court System* video produced by the Commission. The Commission approved the lesson plan which will be disseminated to Maryland high schools, in collaboration with the Citizenship Law-Related Education Project.
- c. **Critical Barriers Committee.** There was no additional.
- d. **Access & Delivery of Legal Services Committee.** There was no additional report.
- e. **Definitions, Standards and Awards Committee.** There was no additional report.