

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 31

Commending the Virginia State Bar's Diversity Conference.

Agreed to by the Senate, February 25, 2011

WHEREAS, in June 2009 the Virginia State Bar created a Diversity Conference that was endorsed and acknowledged by the Supreme Court of Virginia in January 2010; and

WHEREAS, the members of the initial Board of Governors were appointed and are as follows: Manuel Aggie Capsalis, Esq. (Chair), Michael HuYoung, Esq. (Chair Elect), Linda Yvette Lambert, Esq. (Secretary), Edward Laurence Weiner, Esq. (Treasurer), Peter Chapin Burnett, Esq., Beverly J.A. Burton, Esq., Clarence Mosley Dunnaville, Jr., Esq., Michael Andrew Glasser, Esq., Manuel Enrique Leiva, Jr., Esq., Jennifer Leigh McClellan, Esq., Cathleen Kailani Memmer, Esq., Rupen Rasiklal Shah, Esq., Professor Henry Lawrence Chambers, Jr., The Honorable Cleo Elaine Powell, Dean Clinton W. Shinn, John Y. Richardson, Jr., Esq., Ms. Kathy Mays Coleman, Mr. Michel Zajur, and Executive Director Karen Ann Gould (Liaison); and

WHEREAS, the Diversity Conference was recommended by resolution of the Virginia State Bar Council and approved by the Supreme Court of Virginia through the Court's rules; and

WHEREAS, the Diversity Conference's mission is to foster and encourage diversity in the admission to the bar and advancement in the legal profession and the judiciary; to serve as a catalyst for creating leadership and bar service opportunities in the legal profession in Virginia; and to work to ensure that the legal system is responsive to the legal needs of the people of Virginia; and

WHEREAS, the goals of the Diversity Conference are to encourage aspiration to a legal career among diverse individuals; to enhance access to a law-school education for diverse individuals and promote their success; to promote and maintain the quality of legal services in Virginia; to promote and assist the advancement in the legal profession of diverse individuals; to foster diversity at all levels of the judiciary; to enhance participation by lawyers of diversity in the governance and activities of the Virginia State Bar and other organized bar groups; and to provide a forum to assist the legal profession and judiciary in understanding and addressing the legal needs of Virginia's diverse population; and

WHEREAS, membership in the conference is open to all members in good standing with the Virginia State Bar, all local or specialty bar associations in Virginia, and all American Bar Association-accredited Virginia law schools and to any nonlawyer appointed by the president of the Virginia State Bar, and is without cost; and

WHEREAS, recognizing that we all are diverse in some form from one another; and

WHEREAS, recognizing that diversity is a source of pride and achievement in our Commonwealth, and that it has been and will always be a strength of our great nation; and

WHEREAS, with the advent of the Virginia State Bar's Diversity Conference, the legal profession recognizes that with the rapidly changing demographics of our Commonwealth, the legal needs of our citizens are themselves ever-changing, and that the legal profession and the Virginia State Bar have a steadfast duty to be appropriately anticipatory and responsive to these changing legal needs, and that the Diversity Conference is a critical component of this duty; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia State Bar's wisdom, foresight, humanity, and commitment to equal justice, access to justice, and the rule of law are worthy and profoundly important traditions of leadership in the history of this Commonwealth; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate of Virginia, That the Virginia State Bar's Diversity Conference be commended; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the Virginia State Bar as an expression of the Senate of Virginia's respect for the goals and aspirations of the Virginia State Bar by and through the work of the Diversity Conference.

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