



The Legal Aid Society
EMPLOYMENT LAW CENTER

SENT VIA E-MAIL AND REGULAR MAIL

May 13, 2010

Steven B. Scudder
American Bar Association
Standing Committee on Pro Bono and Public Service
321 North Clark Street
Chicago, IL 60654-7598

Dear Mr. Scudder:

I am the President of the Legal Aid Society–Employment Law Center, an organization dedicated to enforcing workplace civil rights of low-wage workers including those who are members of minority and other disadvantaged groups. I write on behalf of our entire staff to express our opposition to the renewed decision of the American Bar Association to hold its 2010 Equal Justice Conference in Arizona this week. We are gravely concerned that the ABA has determined to proceed given the passage of SB 1070, a patently unconstitutional bill that violates the fundamental rights of all persons in the State who are not Caucasian including those primarily who are of Mexican and Latin American descent. We believe that it is untenable to hold an American Bar Association-sponsored conference addressing issues of equal justice in a state that has flagrantly rejected that basic principle.

Because of the gravity of the situation at hand we urge you to hold the conference as a webcast or postpone it so that you can move it to another location. Primarily the ABA must take this action out of respect for the persons whose core rights have been placed at risk by the new law. But the ABA must also consider the interests of those who are most likely to attend this conference. It is an affront to them as well to hold a conference in Arizona, which has trampled on equality and justice—the very subject matter of the program.

We realize that the passage of SB 1070 has presented the ABA with an unexpected challenge. But we hope that it will not be thrown up as a means to prevent the American Bar Association from exercising its leadership and responsibility.

Yours truly,

Joan Graff
President