

Resolution to Extend the Disability Rights Commission

Whereas the National Lawyers Guild passed a resolution at the 2006 Convention recognizing that disability is a serious social problem akin to other forms of invidious discrimination; and

Whereas the resolution passed by the National Lawyers Guild at the 2006 convention recognized that disability discrimination is so entrenched in our society that it often goes unrecognized, even among progressive people, and when recognized often tends to be dismissed or excused; and

Whereas the National Lawyers Guild had previously adopted a resolution at the 2000 Boston convention, requiring that all NLG chapters, committees and other affiliates include in any agreement for the rental space for a meeting or event the requirement that the space be accessible to people with disabilities; and

Whereas the 2006 Convention resolution amended the National Lawyers Guild's Constitution, Article 2, sections 2.1 and 2.1(d), to include "disability" as an express, prohibited basis for discrimination in membership or other participation in the National Lawyers Guild; and

Whereas the 2006 Convention resolution established a Disability Rights Commission, appointed by the National Lawyers Guild, to consist of five members, of which two were to be named by the Disability Rights Committee and three by the National Executive Committee; and

Whereas the Commission was tasked with undertaking a comprehensive review of the policies, practices, procedures and facilities of the National Lawyers Guild, its committees, task forces, projects and chapters, to identify any and all barriers to the full participation of people with disabilities as supporters, members, speakers and presenters, leadership and staff within the National Lawyers Guild; and

Whereas the Commission was tasked with developing recommendations to eliminate barriers and improve practices that will facilitate full participation of people with disabilities, including but not limited to physical access to its facilities, communications access, auxiliary services and supports, web site accessibility, sensitivity and cultural competence: and

Whereas the Commission was further tasked with identifying resources, both within and without the National Lawyers Guild, to enhance full participation of people with disabilities; and

Whereas the Commission has moved diligently to complete its work and issue recommendations to the National Executive Committee of the National Lawyers Guild by the deadline of December 31, 2007, set by the 2006 Convention resolution

Now, be it resolved as follows:

First, that the time for completion of the Commission's work and the issuance of recommendations to the National Executive Committee be extended to December 31, 2008;

Second, that the composition of the Commission be expanded to include an additional two persons appointed from the Disability Rights Committee and the National Executive Committee or a designee approved by the National Executive Committee.

Implementation by the National Executive Committee, the Disability Rights Committee, and the Disability Rights Commission.

Submitted by the National Executive Committee and the Disability Rights Committee, Carol Sobel, carolsobel@aol.com