

## **Proposed Resolution on Disability Discrimination, 2006**

Whereas disability discrimination is a serious social problem akin to other forms of invidious discrimination and has been associated with segregation, incarceration, marginalization, exclusion from social and economic life, denial of basic civil and human rights, and genocide; and

Whereas 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, from the time of its inception, has been committed to championing the rights of all people to equality and has held human rights above property interests; and

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

Whereas the National Lawyers Guild, in planning its conventions, has acknowledged the importance of including presenters with disabilities at its workshops and panels; and

Whereas, despite these efforts, barriers persist that preclude or limit the full participation of people with disabilities in the National Lawyers Guild; and

Whereas, the National Lawyers Guild acknowledges the need to strengthen its practice in including people with disabilities on an equal basis and supporting the rights of people with disabilities;

### **Now, be it resolved as follows:**

**First**, that the Constitution and Bylaws of the National Lawyers Guild be and hereby are amended as set forth in exhibit A, attached to this resolution.

**Second**, that to implement the above amendment, a Commission shall be appointed by the National Lawyers Guild, to consist of five members, of which two shall be named by the Disability Rights Committee and three shall be named by the National Executive Committee, and which will be duly authorized to enlist such assistance from any other persons or organizations as may aid the Commission in carrying out its work. The work of the Commission shall include:

A. 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.

B. 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.

C. Identifying resources, both within and without the National Lawyers Guild, to enhance full participation of people with disabilities.

In carrying out its work, the Commission shall have the full cooperation of the National Lawyers Guild and its committees, task forces, projects, and chapters. It will report quarterly to the National Executive Committee and will issue its recommendations not later than December 31, 2007, which recommendations will include a continuing structure or process for implementation.

In carrying out its work and defining disability discrimination and the remedies therefore, the Commission will look to key principles of the Americans with Disabilities Act and other existing nondiscrimination laws, including but not limited to the duty reasonably to accommodate disabilities, the integration mandate, and architectural and program accessibility, but such principles shall be considered a floor rather than a ceiling. As a radical, progressive organization dedicated to justice, the National Lawyers Guild shall not be constrained by the dictates of legislative compromises and restrictive court interpretations.

Submitted by the Disability Rights Committee and

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Endorsed by the National Executive Committee