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**ABA HOUSE OF DELEGATES TO ADDRESS FEDERAL SHIELD LAW, JUDICIAL
SECURITY, SOCIAL SECURITY REFORM, AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ORDERS
AT ANNUAL MEETING IN CHICAGO**

CHICAGO, July 11, 2005 -- Should reporters be provided protection from revealing confidential sources where the public interest is served by the disclosure of information from a “whistleblower” or informant? Have security vulnerabilities in courthouses around the country been reviewed and corrected by the United States Marshals Service? Should Social Security be reconstructed and if so, what should stay and what should go? How should domestic violence protective orders be enforced? These and many other issues will be debated when the American Bar Association House of Delegates, the association’s policy-making body, convenes during the ABA 2005 Annual Meeting in Chicago, Aug. 4 to 9.

The 547 delegates in the House represent states and territories, ABA entities, state and local bar associations, affiliated organizations and more. The House will meet in the Hyatt Regency Chicago, Grand Ballroom, Gold Level, East Tower, on Monday, Aug. 8, 9 a.m. – 6 p.m. and Tuesday, Aug. 9 from 8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Among resolutions to be considered:

Resolution 104B urges the Congress to enact a federal shield law for journalists. Currently no legal protection exists for reporters at the federal level who report or investigate wrongdoing. Where information can be obtained by other means, the sponsors support protection for journalists. Such a law would extend the protection that now exists in 49 states – either by law or judicial decision – to the federal level.

Recommendation 106C addresses advancement in judicial security since breaches earlier this year led to the death of a state judge in Fulton County, Ga., and family members of a federal judge in Chicago. The resolution urges Congress, the Department of Justice Judicial Security Review Group and the Department of Justice Office of Inspector General to determine whether the U.S. Marshals Service has corrected the vulnerabilities of its judicial security program. The House will also discuss Congress' appropriation of funds to maximize the efforts of the USMS and the courts to fully staff and implement security programs.

The House will also debate Resolution 113A urging continuation of the Social Security program as a national system of social insurance. The resolution also urges that any proposals to restructure the system be evaluated in terms of how they achieve the hallmarks of the existing system, including, among other features, that the program is universal; includes retirement, disability and survivor benefits; earned, with benefits correlated to lifetime earnings; portable and flexible; and cost-effective.

Among other recommendations are proposals to:

- Ensure enforcement of laws providing for arrest for violation of protective orders and that law enforcement officers respond to domestic violence calls, conduct complete investigations and prepare written reports (Resolution 114);
- Adopt the *Model Case Management Order* governing asbestos litigation for federal, state and territorial courts that are without an existing Case Management Order or have one that has proven unworkable (Resolution 103);
- Encourage federal, state, territorial and local governments to afford prison and jail inmates reasonable opportunity to maintain telephonic communication with the free community and to offer telephone services in the correctional setting with an appropriate range of options at the lowest possible rate (Resolution 115B);
- Recommend that federal, state and territorial governments identify and attempt to eliminate the causes of erroneous convictions (Resolution 115A);
- Affirm the belief that an independent judiciary is fundamental to a free society and call on all Americans, including elected officials, to defend the judiciary and its role under the Constitution (Resolution 10A);
- Support policy that preserves the attorney-client privilege and work-product doctrine as essential to maintaining the confidential relationship between client and attorney required to encourage clients to discuss their legal problems fully and candidly with counsel (Resolution 111).

Copies of reports are available online at

www.abanet.org/leadership/2005/annual/summaryofrecommendations/sumofrecs.doc or by contacting Gelasia Croom in the ABA Division for Media Relations and Communication Services at 312/988-6243 or croomg@staff.abanet.org. Copies of reports and recommendations will be available in the ABA Press Room during the Annual Meeting.

Accredited reporters are welcome to attend and cover all sessions for free. A Press Room for working journalists will be in the Hyatt Regency, Chicago, Riverside Center, Purple Level, East Tower, and will be open for on-site media registration beginning at noon on Thursday, Aug. 4. Thereafter the press room will be open from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. and will close one hour after the adjournment of the House of Delegates on Tuesday, Aug. 9.

Reporters may register for the meeting online at www.abanews.org. Credentialing guidelines can be found online at www.abanews.org/credentials.html. For a faxable media registration form, call 312/988-6243 or e-mail a request to abanews@abanet.org. Whether registering online or by fax, reporters may be required to fax a copy of their official government-issued press credential to the Media Relations Division at 312/988-5865.

Hotels offering the ABA discounted rate through July 14 are listed on the Annual Meeting Web site at www.abanet.org/annual/2005/.

With more than 400,000 members, the American Bar Association is the largest voluntary professional membership organization in the world. As the national voice of the legal profession, the ABA works to improve the administration of justice, promotes programs that assist lawyers and judges in their work, accredits law schools, provides continuing legal education, and works to build public understanding around the world of the importance of the rule of law in a democratic society.