

No resolution presented herein reflects the policy of the Minnesota State Bar Association until approved by the Assembly. Informational reports, comments, and supporting data are not approved by their acceptance for filing and do not become part of the policy of the Minnesota State Bar Association unless specifically approved by the Assembly.

**MSBA General Policy Committee
November 7, 2012**

RESOLVED, that the Minnesota State Bar Association support the State of Minnesota Board of Public Defense's Petition to the Minnesota Supreme Court to extend the temporary attorney registration fee increase of \$75.00 for two more years.

Report

The General Policy Committee met on November 7, 2012 to consider whether to support a petition being filed by the public defenders requesting a two year extension of the \$75 surcharge on the attorney registration fee. John Stuart and Robert Sykora from the public defender's office attended the meeting to explain the request for MSBA support and answer questions concerning the petition.

The public defenders are under a constitutional obligation to provide representation and are the single largest user of the court system in the state. Without funding, they will be unable to take advantage of eCourt and move from a paper based system to an electronic system. Moving to an electronic system will not reduce the need for staff positions, however. The public defenders will ask the legislature to fund the 23 positions that are currently being supported by the surcharge on the attorney registration fee. There will be accountability to ensure appropriate usage of the surcharge funds on technology, both on the front end by using the consulting firm McGladrey, and on the back end with the legislative auditor's office.

Following the presentation and discussion, Committee members were satisfied that the public defenders need is genuine and deserves the support of the MSBA. Accordingly, the Committee's vote on the matter was unanimous.