

MATTIE COHAN

From: Alejandro Aviles [aaviles@arlegalaid.org]
Sent: Monday, July 30, 2007 11:54 AM
To: MATTIE COHAN
Cc: 'Lee Richardson'; 'Jennifer Langley'; mloos@arlegalaid.org
Subject: Public Comments for Nashville LSC Board Meeting

Good morning, Mattie,

I'm glad to hear about the news from the board meeting. Northwest Arkansas was actually hosting some senators from the Marshall Islands this weekend and we were able to tell them the good news. They were on their way back from DC where the House Foreign Affairs subcommittee on Asia, the Pacific, and the Global Environment conducted a hearing entitled "An Overview of the Compact of Free Association between the United States and the Republic of the Marshall Islands: Are Changes Needed?". (http://www.internationalrelations.house.gov/hearing_notice.asp?id=869)

When we called in to the conference call at 830, I spoke with Isabella and she told me she could hear us perfectly well, even though I was suspicious of the quality of the speaker phone. When I began to speak, I couldn't hear any feedback while I talked, and was embarrassed when I understood that a good while had passed with people tapping the phone trying to get me to stop and pick-up the handset. I hope that next time the audio/visual tech can recommend that the telephone conference attendee speak through the handset.

Thank you for all of your great work on this issue, Mattie. This will greatly expand our ability to serve all of those who deserve it. Below, you will find a copy, limited by memory and interrupted by technical difficulties, of my comments for the board meeting.

In community,

Alejandro Aviles

Community Outreach Coordinator
Limited English Proficiency Plan Coordinator
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Equal Access to Justice

COMMENTS:

“My name is Alejandro Aviles, Community Outreach Coordinator for Legal Aid of Arkansas. I am charged with reaching out to limited-English Proficient communities in Northwest Arkansas and throughout our program’s service area. Our office recognizes the special vulnerability of clients with limited-English proficiency as we work hard to prevent and resolve consumer fraud issues, protect victims of domestic violence along with many other civil legal problems like LSC-funded organizations throughout the country. When reaching out in Northwest Arkansas, I have found that many in the Marshallese community experience a barrier far greater than language when attempting to receive essential services from our office. Here to speak directly to the issue we face in Arkansas is my friend in the community, Carmen Chong Gum, Marshallese Outreach Coordinator with the Jones Center for Families in Springdale, Arkansas.”