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**Equal Justice Coalition Honors Six Legislators with the Beacon of Justice Award**

BOSTON, November 18, 2009 – The Equal Justice Coalition honored six legislators with the Beacon of Justice Award at the 6<sup>th</sup> Legislative Recognition Reception, which was held last night at WilmerHale.

The following legislators were honored for their outstanding support in providing access to justice for low-income Massachusetts residents with critical civil legal problems: House Speaker Robert A. DeLeo (D-Winthrop), Rep. Charles A. Murphy (D-Burlington), Rep. Eugene L. O’Flaherty (D-Chelsea), Sen. Steven C. Panagiotakos (D-Lowell), Sen. Cynthia Stone Creem (D-Newton), and Sen. Patricia D. Jehlen (D-Somerville).

“These legislators are true champions for the cause of equal justice,” said Lonnie Powers, executive director of the Massachusetts Legal Assistance Corporation. “They understand that civil legal aid is often the last resort for families in crisis, who are facing threats to their jobs, health care and housing. Legal aid is a sound investment for the Commonwealth and is especially important during these difficult economic times.”

Hon. John M. Greaney, retired associate justice of the Supreme Judicial Court, served as the master of ceremonies. Awards were presented by legal aid clients from the legislators’ districts as well as representatives of community organizations, including Yessenia Alfaro, director of community organizing at the Chelsea Collaborative.

The EJC, a collaboration of the Boston Bar Association, Massachusetts Bar Association and the Massachusetts Legal Assistance Corporation (MLAC), works to increase the state appropriation for MLAC’s line item (0321-1600). For more information, visit <http://www.equaljusticecoalition.org>.

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