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Contact: Lori Boguslawski
Phone: 312/988-6147
E-Mail: boguslal@staff.abanet.org

**ABA SECTION OF BUSINESS LAW TO HONOR HOUSTON-BASED LAW FIRM
BAKER BOTTS AND MICHIGAN STATE REPRESENTATIVE STEVEN TOBOCMAN
WITH THE 2003 NATIONAL PUBLIC SERVICE AWARD**

CHICAGO, March 12, 2003 – The Pro Bono Committee of the American Bar Association Section of Business Law will present the 2003 National Public Service Awards to Michigan State Representative Steven Tobocman and to the law firm of Baker Botts at the section's Spring Meeting in Los Angeles on Friday, April 4.

The National Public Service Award is presented annually to one individual and to one firm or corporate legal department that have demonstrated a commitment to providing free legal services to the poor in a business context.

After graduating law school in 1997 Tobocman pursued a public interest law fellowship with the Skadden Foundation, where he provided community groups in southwest Detroit with legal advice on everything from tax issues to developing a legal defense to support the community's battle against irresponsible development.

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NATIONAL PUBLIC SERVICE AWARD, Add One

A year later he founded a *pro bono* legal referral program for nonprofit organizations, which eventually became Community Legal Resources. The program now employs four full-time staff, has served more than 220 organizations, and has a roster of 250 active volunteer lawyers whom Tobocman helped recruit. Tobocman's work has resulted in nearly \$2 million of free legal services to nonprofit community service groups.

In January 1999 Tobocman developed a nonprofit corporations law and urban development clinic at Wayne State University Law School, where he taught for a semester.

Tobocman received his bachelor's degree from the University of Virginia in 1992. He went on to receive his masters degree from the University of Michigan School of Public Policy and his Juris Doctor at the University of Michigan Law School. Currently, Tobocman is a member of the Michigan House of Representatives.

Each year, the lawyers of Baker Botts work thousands of hours on a wide variety of *pro bono* matters. The firm's *pro bono* clients and activities include many different organizations: the American Civil Liberties Union, the AIDS Outreach Committee, the Innocence Project of the National Capital Region, and the Washington Legal Clinic for the Homeless to name but a few.

The firms Texas offices, in Dallas, Houston and Austin, are charter sponsors of Texas Community Building with Attorney Resources (Texas C-BAR), a statewide *pro bono* initiative that provides counsel in corporate and transactional matters to nonprofit organizations serving low-income communities. Baker Botts attorneys have provided services to 22 C-BAR nonprofit clients and have delivered 414 hours in closed matters, at a value of more than \$85,000. In October 2001, Baker Botts received the Texas C-BAR's Community Builder Award.

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NATIONAL PUBLIC SERVICE AWARD, Add Two

Baker Botts has more than 650 lawyers in nine offices – Dallas, Houston and Austin, Texas; New York; Washington, D.C.; London; Moscow; Baku, Azerbaijan; and Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

The National Public Service Award was initiated in 1994 as part of the Business Law Section's *pro bono* project, "A Business Commitment." The ABC project was designed to match business lawyers with legal service programs, community development corporations, charitable organizations or individuals that cannot afford to hire lawyers.

For more information about the Spring Meeting, including a complete listing of all programs and meetings, visit the Section of Business Law Web site, www.abanet.org/buslaw.

With more than 60,000 members, the Section of Business Law is one of the ABA's largest sections. It provides business lawyers with education and analysis that furthers the development and improvement of business law and helps its members serve their clients competently, efficiently and professionally.

The American Bar Association is the largest voluntary professional membership organization in the world. With more than 410,000 members, the ABA provides law school accreditation, continuing legal education, information about the law, programs to assist lawyers and judges in their work, and initiatives to improve the legal system for the public.