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**ABA TAX SECTION SURVEY SHOWS NEED TO MATCH PRO BONO  
VOLUNTEERS WITH LOW INCOME TAXPAYER CLINICS**

***Clinics Seek Assistance in Locating, Managing Pro Bono Volunteers***

WASHINGTON, D.C., Dec. 17, 2008 – Are low-income taxpayers getting the help they need in resolving disputes with the IRS? Are Low Income Taxpayer Clinics meeting the needs in their communities? How can tax lawyers, accountants and enrolled agents contribute their *pro bono* efforts to those taxpayers who need it most?

To answer these questions, the American Bar Association Section of Taxation conducted a survey of Low Income Taxpayer Clinics around the country to gauge their need for assistance from *pro bono* attorneys. LITCs represent low-income taxpayers before the IRS in audit, appeals, collection and federal tax litigation issues; their services are available free or for a nominal fee.

Representatives from more than half of the nation's 150 LITCs responded to the survey. While most reported a need for increased tax services for the poor, they cited a lack of personnel and resources necessary to manage and train *pro bono* volunteers to help in the clinics. Clinic staff also noted several barriers to seeking outside assistance, including the lack of qualified, interested *pro bono* volunteers, too little time to organize

them and too few resources to provide adequate training. Results of the survey can be found here: [Low Income Taxpayer Clinic Survey](#).

In response to the survey results, the ABA Tax Section is developing an online *pro bono* match program for those Low Income Taxpayer Clinics that seek outside tax assistance for current and potential clients. The service will enable LITC personnel to go online and describe their needs, while allowing section members who are interested in *pro bono* work to sign up and locate the clinics that need their help. The section will also develop training materials to help members become familiar with issues specific to LITC clients, such as the earned income tax credit, stimulus payment protocols and English as a Second Language issues. Through its outreach to taxpayers, the section will also help publicize the LITCs and the tax assistance they provide nationwide.

“We are pleased to provide avenues of opportunity for our members to help low-income taxpayers in this way,” said Bill Wilkins, chair of the ABA Section of Taxation. “In the current economic climate, the need for assistance is greater than ever,” he said, adding “LITCs can’t carry the load on their own; the private bar needs to help.” Wilkins noted that the section is committed to fostering an interest in *pro bono* work within its membership. It recently named two Public Service Fellows, who will work in tax-related 501(c)(3) organizations; in addition, the section will name the 2009 Janet Spragens Pro Bono Award winner in the coming weeks. More information about the ABA Tax Section and its *pro bono* efforts is available at: <http://www.abanet.org/tax/>.

The American Bar Association Section of Taxation is the largest professional association of tax lawyers, with approximately 21,000 members nationwide. Its goals

include helping taxpayers better understand their rights and obligations under the tax laws and working to achieve a simplified tax system that is equitable and efficient.

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.