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### **South Carolina Chief Justice Jean Hoefler Toal To Receive Pursuit Of Justice Award**

CHICAGO, Oct. 2, 2008 — The American Bar Association Tort Trial & Insurance Practice Section will honor Jean Hoefler Toal, chief justice of the South Carolina Supreme Court, with the Pursuit of Justice Award, which recognizes lawyers and judges who have shown outstanding merit and excelled at ensuring access to justice.

The award will be presented to Toal at the section's fall meeting in Hilton Head, S.C., during the section's council meeting on Friday, Oct. 3 at 10:30 a.m. The meeting will be held in the Archer East Room of the Westin Resort, Hilton Head Island.

Toal has served as South Carolina's chief justice since 2000. She was first elected to the state Supreme Court as an associate justice in 1988, and was installed as chief justice in 2000. She was elected chief justice in 2004 and is serving a ten-year term that expires in 2014. Toal is the first and only woman to serve on the court.

She received a Juris Doctor from the University of South Carolina School of Law in 1968 and a Bachelor of Arts from Agnes Scott College in 1965. In college, Toal served on the judicial council and national supervisory board of the U.S. National Student Association. In law school she served as managing editor, leading articles editor and book review editor of the South Carolina Law Review. Toal is a member of the Order of the Coif, Mortar Board and Phi Beta Kappa. She was admitted to the bar in 1968, one of a handful of women lawyers licensed in the state.

Prior to her election to the court, Toal was an associate with the Haynesworth Law Firm in Greenville, and later joined Belser, Baker, Barwick, Ravenel, Toal & Bender in Columbia where she served as partner. She was in private practice for 20 years and practiced plaintiff and defense law, criminal law, and handled complex constitutional litigation. Beginning in 1975, for 13 years Toal served in the South Carolina House of

Representatives, representing Richland County. She held a number of leadership posts during her tenure with the House.

Toal is an active community leader, serving as trustee of Agnes Scott College, president of the Conference of Chief Justices and board chair of the National Center for State Courts. For her longtime commitment to justice, Toal has been honored by the South Carolina Trial Lawyers and was named as one of the top 25 doers, dreamers and drivers of technology in government by *Government Technology* magazine. Additionally, Toal has received honorary doctorate degrees from the University of South Carolina, Francis Marion University, The Citadel, Columbia College, the College of Charleston and the Charleston School of Law.

“Chief Justice Toal has paved the way for young women in the profession. She is a model to all lawyers who are engaged in trial work. She has made a commitment to ensuring that the court system works and serves the public. Through her efforts, the courts in South Carolina have developed initiatives to modernize its system with technology and improve its efficiency. The Chief embodies the true definition of a public servant, committed to helping the courts meet the needs of our community by ensuring fairness and impartiality,” said Timothy W. Bouch, Charleston, section chair.

The ABA Tort Trial & Insurance Practice Section unites plaintiff, defense, insurance and corporate counsel to advance the civil justice system. TIPS is a national source of expertise in tort, trial and insurance practice and brings lawyers together to share information and speak out on issues of importance. The section, with nearly 35,000 members, has 34 general committees that focus on substantive and procedural matters in areas across the broad spectrum of civil law and practice. For more information about the Tort Trial & Insurance Practice Section visit the TIPS Web site, [www.abanet.org/tips](http://www.abanet.org/tips).

With more than 407,000 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.

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***Editors Note:*** Reporters are welcome to attend the award presentation at the TIPS Fall Meeting. Media credentials can be obtained by contacting Deborah Weixl, ABA Division for Media Relations and Communication Services, at 312/988-6126 or e-mail [weixld@staff.abanet.org](mailto:weixld@staff.abanet.org). On site call 847/902-9019.