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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

THIRD JUDICIAL CIRCUIT PRO BONO COMMITTEE LAUNCHES NEW PRO BONO PLEDGE
Attorneys Pledge to Increase Access to Justice for Area's Neediest

The Third Judicial Circuit Pro Bono Committee has launched a new Pro Bono Pledge, which recognizes the responsibility of all members of the legal profession – from corporate lawyers to law firm lawyers to solo practitioners to legal staff – to increase access to our legal system. The Pledge calls on law firms and corporate legal departments to:

1. encourage attorneys and legal staff to provide pro bono legal services and in doing so provide an environment which is hospitable to the rendition of such services;
2. designate a primary pro bono point of contact within the firm or corporate law department;
3. consider adopting a written pro bono policy; and
4. recognize attorneys and legal staff who participate in pro bono services, as appropriate.

The Pledge was officially launched on September 9, 2014 with a letter from Madison County Judge Barbara Crowder, who is chairing the Committee, that was sent to all law firms and corporate legal departments in the Third Judicial Circuit. Thus far, 21 law firms, corporations, attorneys and mediators have signed on to the Pledge. See a full list of signatories on PILI's website at www.pili.org/pro-bono/judicial-circuit-committees/third-judicial-circuit-pro-bono-pledge. All signatories to the Pledge will be recognized at the Third Judicial Circuit's Celebrate Pro Bono Luncheon on Tuesday, October 21, 2014.

The [Third Judicial Circuit Pro Bono Committee](http://www.pili.org/pro-bono/judicial-circuit-committees/third-judicial-circuit-pro-bono-pledge) is a group of lawyers, judges and interested individuals that formed in 2011 with a goal to assist low-income residents through promoting pro bono. Land of Lincoln Legal Assistance Foundation, the Public Interest Law Initiative (PILI) and Catholic Charities Legal Services are important partners in this effort to encourage and promote pro bono work.

Pro Bono Committees in Illinois' Fifth, Sixth, Tenth, and Fourteenth Judicial Circuits are also launching or have launched similar Pro Bono Pledges to encourage and promote pro bono locally. PILI applauds the efforts of these attorneys in Illinois' Third Judicial Circuit and across the state to expand access to justice for Illinois' neediest and most vulnerable. More information about the Pro Bono Pledge is available at: www.pili.org/pro-bono/pro-bono-pledge. For more information about PILI's Judicial Circuit Pro Bono Committees, see: www.pili.org/pro-bono/judicial-circuit-committees.

About PILI: PILI's mission is to cultivate a lifelong commitment to public interest law and pro bono service within the Illinois legal community to expand the availability of legal services for people, families and communities in need. PILI envisions a legal community with a deeply rooted culture of service, where law students, lawyers and legal professionals at all stages of their careers engage in public interest law or pro bono work, and remain committed to addressing the unmet legal needs of the poor and underrepresented.

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To learn more about PILI, visit our website at www.pili.org, or contact PILI Executive Director Michael Bergmann at mbergmann@pili.org or 312-832-5129.