

## **Message from the Managing Partner**

Lisa E. Cleary

This year will mark the twelfth anniversary of the Firm's one hundred percent participation in our pro bono program. This is representative of the amazing work that our lawyers, legal assistants and staff have done over decades of years of service in support of our pro bono program.

What is most meaningful about our pro bono program to the dozens and dozens of individual clients we represent and in the class action context to the thousands of young people, runaway and homeless youth, children languishing in foster care, and those many others whom we represent in law reform litigation, is that our lawyers understand far better than many other attorneys how critical it is and how urgent the needs are of the pro bono clients that we serve.

This sense of urgency to the problems of the clients that we represent really is the hallmark of our Firm's pro bono program. We understand that every day that passes without roofs over the heads of runaway and homeless youth, every day that children in acute psychiatric hospitals remain hospitalized after the medical providers have deemed them medically ready for discharge, when nursing home residents don't have appropriate evacuation procedures in place when a disaster strikes and they're left to fend for themselves in untenable situations, that our role as lawyers and advocates for our clients is to move the litigations and matters forward to a rapid conclusion, using the intellect, resources, creativity, and ingenuity of our lawyers to advance the important causes of our pro bono clients.

Time and again public interest organizations who have honored us have commented on the Firm's unwavering dedication and passion for the plight of individuals who cannot represent themselves and cannot afford to pay a lawyer and how our dedication and commitment and burning sense of urgency to address their legal problems sets us apart from any other law firm.

Whether it is individual representation, law reform litigation, class action litigation or solving problems short of litigation for the betterment of our clients, our lawyers and our support staff work together to identify the source of the problem, find solutions and take immediate steps to address those problems.

It makes all of us very proud to see that the passion of our founding partners at Patterson Belknap continues today, decades later, in the work of all of our lawyers and that this forms the strongest membrane that binds our firm together.