



Indigent defense need urgent

Dennis Archer testifies before House subcommittee

As states across the nation are forced to slash budgets, public defender offices are being left severely short-staffed, calling into question whether the seminal right established by the U.S. Supreme Court in *Gideon v. Wainwright* is being upheld.

The American Bar Association believes that the current situation is urgent. Testifying on behalf of the ABA before the House Judiciary Committee, Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism and Homeland Security, on Friday, former ABA President Dennis Archer cited the ABA's recommendation that the federal government "establish and fund an independent non-profit Center for Defense Services" in order to strengthen services of public defenders who are often finding themselves stretched too thin to adequately represent their clients.

Citing the inequity for poor individuals in

their defense, Archer — in prepared testimony — underscored that "indigent defense services have remained a 'poor stepchild' compared to state prosecutors and prosecutorial resources

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For complete text of Dennis Archer's statement.

funded through the administration of those programs."

Archer acknowledged that budgetary issues

are a concern, but said there are lessons that can be shared and implemented.

"We are all in this struggle together," he said. "The payoff will be not only a justice system that meets all our standards of fundamental fairness, but a system that is effective and efficient at all levels and in all corners of our country," concluded Archer.

"Dennis Archer's compelling testimony reminds us of the importance to our nation of having a justice system that is able to deliver fundamental fairness," said ABA President H. Thomas Wells, Jr. "Public defenders help assure that justice is not limited to those who can afford to pay for defense, but is truly available to all. Our nation cannot live up to the promise of justice embedded in our legal system without adequate resources for defense."

In addition to serving as president of the ABA from 2003-2004, Archer is past president of the Michigan Bar Association, former Justice of the Michigan Supreme Court and former mayor of Detroit. Archer testified during a hearing addressing the question, "Representation of Indigent Defendants in Criminal Cases: A Constitutional Crisis in Michigan and Other States?"

True to the fight

Attorney known as real 'gentleman' of the law

By TOM KIRVAN
Legal News

A former colleague called him "a lawyer's lawyer," perhaps one of the highest compliments that can be paid to a member of the legal profession



The life of Tom Trenta was celebrated and remembered at a Funeral Mass held March 26 at St. Andrew's Catholic

baseball and softball," Papelian said. "He could really hit. He also organized a basketball pick-up league and was the unofficial 'commissioner' while it was going strong."

Trenta, in the same vein, was an

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DAILY MIEFS

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xtract his digit for two hours d the fire department. It was before emergency responders : out of the vehicle.

oved Harris' finger from the 70 stitches.

learned his lesson and won't n the gas tank.

ds guilty in ted break-in

(AP) — A Michigan man ig into a gas station before n himself in so he could see l has pleaded to a lesser

r-old Matthew Robert Kiss eaded guilty last week to