



vfortuno@lsc.gov

July 22, 2008

John Balazs
Attorney At Law
916 2nd Street, Suite F
Sacramento, CA 95814

President

Helaine M. Barnett

Board of Directors

Frank B. Strickland
Atlanta, GA
Chairman

Lillian R. BeVier
Charlottesville, VA
Vice Chairman

Thomas A. Fuentes
Lake Forest, CA

Herbert S. Garten
Baltimore, MD

David Hall
Stoughton, MA

Michael D. McKay
Seattle, WA

Thomas R. Meites
Chicago, IL

Bernice Phillips-Jackson
Buffalo, NY

Sarah M. Singleton
Santa Fe, NM

Re: CV-S 08-CV-01113-GEB-DAD
Claim of Rollie and Scharlynn Trout
Appointment of John Balazs, esq.

Dear Mr. Balazs:

Thank you for your interest in representing Mr. and Mrs. Trout in the above captioned civil forfeiture case.

Please provide this letter to the Court as a statement of consent of the Legal Services Corporation (LSC) to your appointment to represent Rollie and Scharlynn Trout in the above-referenced matter pursuant to 18 U.S.C. §983(b)(2)(A).

While LSC consents to your appointment, LSC defers to the court regarding the Trout's eligibility under the statute, which requires them a) to use the property in question as their primary residence and b) to otherwise be financially unable to afford counsel. There is no set standard for financial eligibility under this statute, but generally courts have applied the same methods and standards they would use for determining financial eligibility for CJA counsel.

Payment for counsel is handled through court order at CJA rates regardless of the outcome of the case. After the Court issues an order for fees, the U.S. Attorney's office submits that order to the Department of Treasury for payment from the forfeiture fund. I am sending you via e-mail a copy of the forms for payment for you to share with the U.S. Attorney's office. The form of the petition for fees is not pre-determined—any format acceptable to the court will suffice.

Please contact Mark Freedman, an Assistant General Counsel at LSC, at 202-295-1623, if you have any questions. Thank you very much.

Very truly yours,

Victor M. Fortuno
Vice President & General Counsel