# **Resolution 2010-01**

**(Regarding Civil Rights Protection of Blind People and Their guide dogs in Public Accommodations)**

WHEREAS, one of the  missions of the National Federation of the Blind of New Jersey (NFBNJ)  is to  remove   the legal, social, and economic barriers faced by the blind of New Jersey  which prevent them   from  achieving full integration into society on terms of equality; and

WHEREAS, discrimination by proprietors of public accommodations is one of the barriers faced by the blind, especially among those who choose to use a guide dog as their mobility tool; and

WHEREAS, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in public accommodations; and

WHEREAS, the United States Department of Justice's 2010 revisions to the regulations of the ADA have made significant changes to provisions pertaining to service animals; and

WHEREAS, New Jersey has laws that contain provisions that are not in compliance with the ADA, such as New Jersey’s definition of “service animal”; and

WHEREAS, a majority of states provide criminal penalties for discrimination on the basis of disability, allowing law enforcement officials to intervene, generally resulting in an immediate resolution of such access issues while providing appropriate penalties for more serious infractions, and relieving individuals from the burden of costly litigation and prolonged civil processes: Now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind of New Jersey in Convention assembled this seventh day of November, 2010, in the township  of Clark, New Jersey, that this organization strongly urge state legislators to examine and update statutes for parity with the Americans with Disabilities Act, removing provisions that are not in compliance with this federal law; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this organization also urge that any changes to such statutes include criminal penalties for acts of discrimination to promote and protect the equal rights of their blind citizens more effectively.