

Faulk, Camilla

From: Melissa Chin [melissachinjd@hotmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, April 30, 2009 10:23 AM
To: Faulk, Camilla
Subject: Opposition to APR 28

POL Board,

I would like to express my brief opinion on Proposed APR 28. As a licensed attorney, I feel APR 28 would do more harm than good for the legal field. The purpose behind APR 28, from my understanding, is the need for those who cannot afford legal advice and decide to represent themselves pro se to obtain legal guidance. There are numerous free legal clinics staffed with volunteer licensed attorneys. However, these programs are quickly overbooked with those seeking legal advice. Instead of enacting APR 28, the POL Board should look to distributing the money to free legal clinics or enacting INCENTIVE for licensed attorneys to volunteer their time. I, personally, volunteer my time at a free legal clinic and what seems like a simple legal issue (surely one that "legal technicians" will be allowed to handle) can branch out into many complex issues. It is impossible to triage out the "simple" cases that "legal technicians" will be able to handle. This proposed system is unmanageable and pointless.

Given the recent economic crisis, there are many licensed attorneys in WA who are currently unemployed. Instead of creating more pointless competition and lowering the skills needed to practice law in this State, focus the time, energy, and money on getting the licensed attorneys to help pro ses.

The APR 6: Legal Clerk program is essentially the same. Glancing at the requirements of APR 6 and APR 28, I notice the requirements are very similar. Why enact a new rule, essentially lowering the standards even lower, when there is already a program in place? If anyone wants to give legal advice, they should be required to pass the WA State BAR EXAM. If I wanted a diagnosis on a medical ailment, I wouldn't go to a Nurse Practitioner; I would go to a licensed physician. Granted, these "legal technicians" will be limited on their scope of advice, but leave the PRACTICE OF LAW TO THOSE LICENSED AND QUALIFIED TO PRACTICE. Do not change the licensing requirements to include those inept to fully grasp the law as a whole.

Thank you for your time,

Melissa Chin
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