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December 11, 2008

Washington State Supreme Court  
Temple of Justice  
P.O. Box 4174  
Olympia, WA 98504-1174

Re: Proposed Legal Technician Rule

Dear Supreme Court Justices:

I am writing to you regarding the proposed Legal Technician Rule. I have been an attorney for twenty years and my practice is primarily in the area of family law. I am also familiar with many other areas of law that are related to this area of law, such as Assault 4th Degree, Domestic Violence Protection Orders, Dependency, Bankruptcy, Guardianship, etc.

I volunteer at my local Bar Association legal clinic, I donate to the clinic and I do a lot of "involuntary pro bono" work to make sure that my clients are represented. I know that I am not alone in my efforts to give people access to the legal system. I also know that there are many people who do not have representation, but my experience is that the legal system "bends over backwards" to give pro se parties, who cannot afford services, access to the system. For example, the court frequently appoints Guardian Ad Litem or Family Court Services at county expense or at county rate when custodial and parenting issues are involved. Would a Legal Technician who does not appear in court at hearings even know that these services are available to their clients?

I know that you can request a Guardian Ad Litem by checking the box on the pattern form, but the pattern form does not indicate that a GAL can be appointed at county expense or at county rate for those parties that cannot afford it. There is also no reference at all to Family Court Services or CASA or other programs that may exist in other counties. How would a legal technician know about these court offered services?

This is just one example of the type of specialized knowledge that an attorney practicing in the field knows and that a Legal Technician would not necessarily know. I could come up with many more of these types of issues, but the point is that I do not believe that you can adequately train a Legal Technician to the level they would need to give good legal advice to clients, particularly in the area of family law, which has so many complications.

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SUPREME COURT  
STATE OF WASHINGTON  
2008 DEC 16 A 8 21  
BY RONALD R. CARPENTIER  
CLERK

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December 12, 2008

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Ruth Spalter". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Ruth A. Spalter

RAS/ms