

April 28, 2009

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Honorable Justices of the Supreme Court
P.O. Box 40929
Olympia, WA 98504-0929

Dear Honorable Justices:

I write in support of APR 28. I believe that a class of limited practice "Legal Technicians" would be a positive change for Washington.

I believe that access to justice and legal documents should be widely available at a low cost. The benefits of the legal system should not be limited to those who can afford a lawyer. Three-quarters of low-income families will have a civil legal need each year (Washington Civil Legal Needs Study). Eighty-five percent of these people face their legal situations without an attorney (WCLNS). Is it preferable for these people to struggle with these situations with no help or receive assistance from a legal technician. Furthermore, few of these low-income people are clients of attorneys, therefore legal technicians will not be "stealing" the bread and butter of lawyers.

I believe that the people identified by APR 28 will be able to provide high quality service. People with two to three years of law office experience and a degree in Paralegal Studies will definitely be able to draft pleadings, notes for motion, and other such documents. They will be unable to work clients with real estate needs, thus will mainly work for the working poor. The pro bono requirement helps to create a class of technicians who are willing to make legal assistance affordable and sometimes free. In all likelihood, some of the paralegals who would qualify as legal technicians could perform better legal work than some new, inexperienced attorneys.

I believe that the public would not be confused about the scope of law that legal technicians may perform, as legal technicians must post in twelve point bold font that they are not a lawyer and

may only perform limited work.

One comment stated the fear that legal technicians would mess up the case of a low-income person. Many people without legal assistance abandon their cases or personally mess up their cases through their pro se representation. Providing access to legal technicians is a great way to make the court process understandable to a pro se person.

Sincerely,

Theodore Gemmer