

State of Washington
Supreme Court
415 12th Street W.
Olympia, WA. 98504

25 April 2019

To the Clerk of the Supreme Court:

Attorney spouses of servicemembers know firsthand the challenge of balancing a career with the demands of the military lifestyle. Lawyers married to servicemembers face significant barriers to employment due to their frequent moves among duty stations.

The requirement – and the cost – to take a new bar examination every two or three years is extremely disruptive to careers, particularly when the process of applying for, taking, and waiting for the results of a bar exam can last almost a year.

As a result of these challenges, military spouse attorneys have an unemployment rate estimated as high as 28 percent and suffer from a \$33,000 wage gap in comparison to their civilian counterparts. In recognition of these unique challenges facing military spouse attorneys, thirty-three states and the U.S. Virgin Islands have enacted rules to allow attorney spouses of servicemembers to practice law while accompanying their spouses on orders in a jurisdiction.

These rules have a broad range of support, including the Conference of Chief Justices, the American Bar Association, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, and the Military Officers Association of America.

Washington now has the opportunity to demonstrate its strong support of our nation's military and their families through reducing barriers to employment for military spouses in the legal profession. As Chair of the Legal Assistance to Military Personnel (LAMP) Section of the Washington State Bar Association, I am writing to express LAMP's support such efforts. Specifically, LAMP supports adopting Proposed APR 3(h).

Proposed APR 3(h) eliminates many barriers to allow military spouse attorneys to be admitted into the Washington State Bar all the while subjecting them to the same high ethical and professional standards imposed on all other attorneys. I speak not just as the Chair for LAMP but also as a veteran when I say that this proposed rule will greatly benefit our military families, opening the doors of employment for divers many, and will help us defend the rights of those who defend us.

I encourage the Court to adopt this pathway to practice for military spouse attorneys that helps them maintain career continuity while serving alongside their spouse in uniform.

Adoption of APR 3(h) allowing admission for military spouses without additional examination to the bar would recognize the tremendous sacrifices of our military families and would be an appropriate measure of appreciation considering their support for our nation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Eric McDonald', written over a horizontal line.

Eric McDonald – Chair

On behalf of the WSBA LAMP Section Executive Committee:

Sharon Powell – Immediate Past Chair
Stephen Carpenter – Chair Elect
Paul Apple – Secretary/Treasurer
Adam Torem – Strategic Planning Committee
Jon Bridge – Strategic Planning Committee
Kenyon Luce – Strategic Planning Committee
Alex Straub – Strategic Planning Committee
Jeff Coats – Legislative Liaison

Tracy, Mary

From: OFFICE RECEPTIONIST, CLERK
Sent: Monday, April 29, 2019 8:11 AM
To: Tracy, Mary
Subject: FW: LTR OF SUPPORT TO SUPREME COURT WRT ARP 3(h)
Attachments: LAMP.Support.Ltr.APR3(h).2019.pdf

Importance: High

From: eric mcdonald [mailto:eric.mcdonald@q.com]
Sent: Saturday, April 27, 2019 8:32 PM
To: OFFICE RECEPTIONIST, CLERK <SUPREME@COURTS.WA.GOV>
Subject: LTR OF SUPPORT TO SUPREME COURT WRT ARP 3(h)
Importance: High

To the Clerk of the Supreme Court:

Attached you will find WSBA Section LAMP's letter of support for adopting APR 3(h).

Very respectfully,
Eric McDonald
LAMP – Chair