

Washington State Chapter
American Immigration Lawyers Association



Chair:

Marsha Mavunkel

Ryan Swanson & Cleveland
1201 Third Avenue, Suite 3400
Seattle WA 98101
Tel: (206) 654-2253
Fax: (206) 652-2953
Email: mavunkel@ryanlaw.com

Vice Chair:

Diana Chamberlain

Chamberlain Sanchez Immigration
1700 21st Ave. S. Suite 202
Seattle, Washington 98144
Tel: (206) 207-0617
Fax: (360) 336-9705
Email:
diana@csimmigrationlaw.com

Secretary:

Brad Brown

Attorney at Law
17000 Viking Way NW
Poulsbo, WA 98370
Tel: (360) 936-2882
Email: bradleybrown360@gmail.com

Treasurer:

Abtin Bahador

Cascadia Cross-Border Law
1305 11th St. Ste. 301
Bellingham, WA 98225
Tel: (360) 671-5945
Fax: (253) 893-5007
Email: abahador@cascadia.com

Membership Chair:

Kelsey Beckner

Beckner Immigration Law
4444 Woodland Park Ave N,
Suite B101
Seattle, Washington 98103
Tel: (360) 602-1570
Fax: (206) 504-3704
Email:
kelseybecknerlaw@gmail.com

Program Chair:

Richard Hine

Global Justice Law Group
3815 Woodland Park Av. N Ste. 102
Seattle, Washington 98103
Tel: (206) 787-1406
Fax: (866) 897-8543
Email:
richardreeves.hine@gmail.com

Immediate Past Chair:

Richard Rawson

Davis Wright Tremaine LLP
920 Fifth Avenue, Suite 6600
Seattle WA 98104
Tel: (206) 757-8128
Fax: (206) 717-7128
Email: richrawson@dwt.com

March 10, 2021

Clerk of the Washington Supreme Court
PO Box 40929
Olympia, WA 98504-0929
supreme@courts.wa.gov

VIA Electronic Mail to supreme@courts.wa.gov

RE: Support for the MCLE's Board Suggested Amendment to Rule 11 of the Admission and Practice Rules (APR)

Dear Honorable Members of the Washington Supreme Court:

On behalf of the American Immigration Lawyers Association Washington Chapter (AILA-WA) and the Diversity and Inclusion Committee for AILA-WA (AILA-WA D&I Committee), we write in support of the MCLE Board's suggested amendment to Rule 11 of the Admission and Practice Rules (APR).

On September 18, 2020, MCLE Board member Asia Wright presented the suggested amendment to the Board of Governors for review. The suggested amendment would require one ethics credit in the topic of equity, inclusion, and mitigation of bias. The Board of Governors voted 11-2 to support the suggested amendment.

AILA-WA and the D&I AILA-WA Committee are dedicated to helping to educate licensed legal professionals in the topics of diversity, equity, and inclusion. We agree that continuing legal education focusing on these topics is professionally and ethically necessary to develop competence as legal services providers. We recognize that legal professionals have a duty to dismantle existing biases and include previously excluded voices in all aspects of our legal framework.

The AILA-WA D&I Committee has taken steps to address biases, inequalities, and inclusion. In the last several months, we have held three events to encourage awareness,

inclusion, and the eradication of bias.. The members that voluntarily join us express interest, ask questions, and ask for more events to further their increased understanding and corrective actions. We have found a great need and excitement from AILA WA members on these training sessions.

The mandatory nature of this education will promote awareness and change within individuals and the community, education that some might not otherwise seek voluntarily. If this amendment to Rule 11 is confirmed, this will further the opportunities for the legal profession to learn about, and address, systemic inequities that impact our clients, colleagues, and communities - improving the legal system for all.

It is important to note that the American Bar Association has urged all states to adopt its new MCLE model rule that includes MCLE requirements “as a separate credit programs regarding diversity and inclusion in the legal profession of all persons regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disabilities, and programs regarding elimination of bias.” It is clear that there is a strong need and push for lawyers to learn more about equity, inclusion, and mitigation of bias.

For all of these reasons, AILA-WA and the AILA-WA D&I committee respectfully urge the Court to adopt the suggested amendment to APR 11.

Warm regards,



Meena Pallipamu Menter
Chair
Diversity and Inclusion Committee
AILA – WA



Maha Khalil
Vice Chair
Diversity and Inclusion Committee
AILA – WA



Anessa Novasio
Member
Diversity and Inclusion Committee
AILA – WA

From: [OFFICE RECEPTIONIST, CLERK](#)
To: [Linford, Tera](#); [Tracy, Mary](#)
Subject: FW: Letter Supporting Amendment to AR 11
Date: Thursday, March 11, 2021 11:29:20 AM
Attachments: [Letter Supporting New MCLE from American Immigration Attorneys Association 03102021.pdf](#)

From: Meena Pallipamu Menter [mailto:meena@meenamenter.com]
Sent: Thursday, March 11, 2021 11:27 AM
To: OFFICE RECEPTIONIST, CLERK <SUPREME@COURTS.WA.GOV>
Cc: Anessa Novasio <anessa.novasio@gmail.com>; Maha Khalil <maha@nwirp.org>; Diana Chamberlain <diana@csimmigrationlaw.com>
Subject: Letter Supporting Amendment to AR 11

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Dear Supreme Court Members,

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Please see attached letter from the Washington Chapter of the American Immigration Lawyers Association supporting the proposed amendment to AR 11.

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Warm regards,

Meena Pallipamu Menter

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Meena Pallipamu Menter

Attorney

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Menter Immigration Law PLLC

4444 Woodland Park Ave. North, Suite 203

Seattle, WA 98103

meena@meenamenter.com (email)

www.meenamenter.com (website)

206.419.7332 (p)

206.407.2594 (f)

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