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To: [Linford, Tera](#)
Subject: Proposed amendment to APR 11
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To the Washington Supreme Court:

I am writing in support of the proposed Amendment to APR 11, which would require that a portion of the ethics requirement be devoted to equity, inclusion, and the elimination of bias. I believe that this requirement is long overdue.

As practicing business lawyer for more than 30 years, licensed in both California and Washington, I have seen countless examples of lawyers (myself included, I'm sorry to admit), bringing their internalized biases and assumptions to situations ranging from their assessments of potential clients, judges, jurors, to, of course, other lawyers and paralegals. Bias can effect everything about our profession, from hiring, to availability of competent counsel to diverse clients, to jury selection, and beyond. The simple truth is that we all function within the society and culture around us, and are often focused on most immediate goals, ignoring our own internalized biases that perpetuate ills in our communities. However, the events of the last several years (not just last year) amply demonstrate the need for lawyers and the profession as a whole to take a step back and examine internalized biases and assumptions, which can, in the aggregate, perpetuate a lack of equity and true justice in our society and our communities.

As it happens, I am familiar with the similar requirement in California. I can tell you that, far from being politicized, this particular requirement in California has been nothing but helpful with respect to raising the consciousness of lawyers normally too busy (or too harried) to focus on the relevant issues on their own. In my own case, my fulfillment of the requirement often comes as part of a larger CLE conference (e.g., a multi-day intellectual property conference that includes a session on ethics and elimination of bias). Because CLE providers (whether for profit or not), often combine a session on ethics with other sessions, there is pressure on them to avoid politicized curriculum or presenters, focusing instead on presentations that are more useful and practical.

Further, I'd note what is probably obvious to all who support this amendment: the amendment adds no additional time requirements for either ethics or overall MCLE. Rather, it simply communicates to the individual practitioner, the bar, and the public that equity and elimination of bias are important to the improvement of our profession, so some of the existing time requirements should be devoted to those issues.

I urge you to adopt this amendment.

Thank you.

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