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From: Janis Kipp [mailto:janisequa@gmail.com]
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Subject: APR 28 Appendix

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The Limited License Legal Technician program should not be sunsetted, nor should it be limited to the area of Family Law. It should be expanded, nurtured, given the chance to do the good work it was intended to do. It takes time to cultivate relationships with universities and community colleges, to develop the programs needed to encourage students to become Limited Legal License Technicians (LLLTs). Schools want to be assured they can invest in the LLLT program long term. And the program was getting there, more schools were recommending it to their students, and LLLTs were going to classrooms and talking to students and promoting the program. And, like any new, first of its kind program, it had growing pains. But the WSBA only halfheartedly marketed and promoted it. They never fully supported it. Suddenly, and without input from the LLLT board, the Board of Governors (BOG) and the WSBA decided it couldn't be solvent. They determined it was cost prohibitive, even though the WSBA spent more money on their newsletter per year than the LLLT program. AND, the funny thing is, the bar didn't indicate in their budget and financial report to the BOG that the program was a problem, and didn't recommend the program be sunsetted. At least that we are aware of, as much of this was done behind closed doors. The board brought up the issue, and they executed their secret agenda without a whimper from the WSBA. The Court says there is not enough interest in the program, but we have the largest group of people planning to take the LLLT bar exam this year than we ever have. The LLLT program gained more tools to improve their ability to help clients just 1 ½ years ago, such as accompanying them to court, talking to and negotiating with attorneys and opposing parties. And less than 3 months later the program gets cancelled. Talk to some family law judges who see the pleadings filed by LLLTs, who've had LLLTs in their courtrooms, who deal with parties assisted by LLLTs, and ask them if they think the program should be sunsetted. The lack of sufficient access to justice and affordable legal services is a travesty, the courts are bogged down, and with everything that is going on in our country, less access to legal services is a strain on our communities and an obstruction to justice. And there are less people becoming attorneys every year. The cost of college and law school, the amount of time it takes to get a law degree, the income new attorneys make while having to pay student loans, all contribute to the decline in attorney numbers. At the same time, the number of people needing legal help is skyrocketing, and the more complicated court rules make it almost impossible for people to represent themselves. With the increase in need for legal help, there is plenty of work to be had for both attorneys and LLLTs. Do not sunset the LLLT program. Make access to justice a priority, like the Court said it would.

Thank you,
Janis Kipp LLLT141

