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September 12, 2016

DELIVERED VIA EMAIL

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Greetings:

The Whatcom County Bar Association met September 7, 2016 for its monthly meeting. The WCBA passed a resolution instructing the President of WCBA to draft a letter to the Washington State Bar Association and appropriate officials expressing the feedback the WCBA President received regarding proposed changes to the WSBA by-laws. This letter follows the instruction.

The Whatcom County Bar Association respectfully requests the WSBA and its Board of Governors extend the time-frame for voting on the proposed by-law changes. A delay is necessary for more WSBA members, especially those in the Whatcom County Bar, to research, process and formally comment on the proposed changes. While this suggestion does not fit within the current Board of Governors' preference for timing, and their wish to have closure after several years of work on this project, it does ensure that all members of the WSBA, including my constituents, have ample time to reflect and comment on the proposed changes.

The WCBA is aware of the magnitude of time and effort that the WSBA officers and governors have put into this endeavor. The WCBA is also aware of the desire for the current slate of governors to finish this project after so many volunteer-hours have been expended in service of the WSBA. However, the need for expediency and closure is not overcome by the need of the WSBA's membership to feel it had adequate time to research, process and respond to its governing members regarding the proposed, sweeping and significant changes.

The proposed changes are significant in both function and appearance. The overwhelming vocal response from my Whatcom County colleagues makes clear that the proposed changes are too large, too substantive, and appear to be moving ahead too quickly for its members to feel comfortable with the changes. We respectfully ask that you heed our request to postpone action until a larger dialogue can occur, and afford concerned members of the WSBA the opportunity to further participate in the process of changing our institution.

Respectfully yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Thomas P. Lyden". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending from the end of the name.

Thomas P. Lyden, President
Whatcom County Bar Association