

CONTINUED DISCUSSIONS OF WSBA GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE – Vern Harkins, BOG Governance Work Group, Chair

Chair Harkins referred the Board to the information contained in the meeting materials and reviewed each of the Task Force recommendations discussed at the previous Board meeting. President Gipe stated that it was the consensus of the Board that it approves the responses contained in the meeting materials. He then opened the floor for questions on any of the Governance items in the materials to date. Discussion ensued regarding the selection and criteria for the proposed public members on the Board, and the relationship between the Executive Director, the WSBA, and the Supreme Court. It was noted that some of these items are being handled with the Court through amendments to GR 12.2.

WASHINGTON NEW AND YOUNG LAWYERS – Vincent Humphrey, Chair; Governor Robin Haynes, Liaison; and Paris Eriksen, New Lawyer Support Specialist

New Lawyer Support Specialist Eriksen iterated the context and background for this discussion, and explained the composition of the planning team. She noted that two issues have been brought into focus for discussion: debt load and unemployment; and the objective is to listen to what the new lawyers have to say on these issues and what role they envision the WSBA can play in addressing these issues. President Gipe reminded the group that there is a wealth of staff present at the meeting who are subject matter experts on this topic. Chair Humphrey explained that a survey was done and robust discussion held in preparation for this discussion. Governor Haynes referred the Board to the information in the meeting materials regarding law school costs, average debt incurred, and rates of employment.

Discussion ensued regarding WSBA's role and responsibility, if any, in the debate regarding student loan debt. Suggestions included: invite law schools to engage in conversations around lower tuitions; reduce debt load in exchange for working in clinics; loan repayment assistance vehicles; lobby Congress to lower interest rates on student loans; offer credit for pro bono work; expand Washington state law clerk program and provide other opportunities for education outside of law school; institute a requirement that Washington law schools must be accredited by Washington state and must meet certain criteria, including affordability; provide a forum for law schools to discuss solutions; provide debt clinics, debt counseling, loan debt