

Washington State Bar Association

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Work Group Evaluating Whether to Seat Public Representatives on WSBA Governing Board

Open meetings begin this week to gather feedback

SEATTLE, WA [7/11/18] — The Washington State Bar Association (WSBA) Board of Governors has convened a work group to evaluate whether members of the public should hold seats on the board. **The work group will have its first meeting at 10 a.m., July 12**, and is scheduled to make a recommendation at the board's Sept. 27 meeting. The work group's meetings are open to the public.

- The first meeting will be held at the WSBA offices, 1325 Fourth Ave., Suite 600, Seattle
- To participate by phone, call 866-577-9294 and enter the passcode 52824
- Meeting dates, agendas, and materials will be posted online at www.wsba.org/new-governors-workgroup

In furtherance of its obligation to protect and serve the public, the WSBA both regulates lawyers and other legal professionals and acts as a professional association to its members. The WSBA does not receive public funding.

The Board of Governors determines WSBA bylaws and annual budget. Governors have historically been lawyers (15 lawyer-governors are currently seated). In 2016, following a four-year governance review, the board amended its bylaws to add three new seats: two public members and one member representing other legal license types (Limited License Legal Technicians and Limited Practice Officers). The Washington Supreme Court issued an order approving the amendment in January 2018.

Several governors proposed a bylaw amendment in April to remove the public seats and allow the other license types to run for election in current governor districts. The work group—which includes members of the public—was formed to evaluate the proposed amendment and make a recommendation back to the board.

"This is an open process, and it's important to include people who may be losing representation on the board, especially if they are not aware of the opportunity," said WSBA President Bill Pickett.

Because the Washington Supreme Court has already issued an order approving the new seats, any change in board composition would require a new Supreme Court order.

About the Washington State Bar Association

The WSBA operates under the delegated authority of the Washington Supreme Court to license the state's nearly 40,000 lawyers and other legal professionals. In furtherance of its obligation to protect and serve the public, the WSBA both regulates lawyers and other legal professionals and serves its members as a professional association—all without public funding. The WSBA's mission is to serve the public and the members of the Bar, to ensure the integrity of the legal profession, and to champion justice. For more information, visit www.wsba.org.

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