

Response to Executive Director's Message

Thank you for the informative Executive Director's Message in this month's *Virginia Lawyer* (October, 2016). Based upon the information you provided, as compared to North Carolina, it appears that Bar Council is being fiscally responsible in its expenditures. It also makes efficient and expeditious use of council members' time. You have quite rightly outlined the advantages of having a robust number and diversity of representative voices on Bar Council. According to your article, both the size and diversity of Bar Council mostly reflect the size and diversity of our bar. Assuming those facts are true, unless there is a mandate to reduce costs significantly or an identified problem with our Bar Council's ability to act due to its size or breadth of diversity, I see no reason to make such a significant change. Other than the *potential* for problems listed in the *Hastings* article, unless I missed it in your message, none of those appear to be *actual* problems for us.

I have not served on Bar Council and cannot give a firsthand perspective. I can appreciate the inherent efficiency in reducing the number of decision makers. However, from where I sit, it looks like the work is getting done within a conservative budget. As they say, if it's not broken....

Rosalie Pemberton Fessier
Staunton, Virginia

Having served as the director of state and national professional associations including a state bar, your recent Executive Director's Message in the *Virginia Lawyer* (October, 2016) regarding bar governance is of interest.

I must say I was a bit taken aback by the large number of members on the Council. Effective governance by such an unwieldy body would seem to me to be very difficult. There is a much smaller Executive Committee, which in all likelihood really governs the organization. Credence to the notion that the Executive Committee really runs

the show is exemplified by the fact that Council meetings are fairly perfunctory. Membership on the Council may look good on member resumés but doesn't mean they play a meaningful role in bar governance.

I do agree that diversity is a good thing and should be encouraged but a diverse governing body does not necessarily mean an organization will be well governed. Having a few hard-working, dedicated "board" members will go a long way towards facilitating an organization accomplishing its goals. When cost becomes a consideration, I would opt for committing resources to supporting effective participation over having an unnecessarily large governing body.

Roger Detweiler
Bend, Oregon

Response to Lawyers at Leisure Cover Story

I just received the most recent issue of *Virginia Lawyer*, and I felt compelled to write because I found the cover article of Vol. 65/No.2 (August 2016) to be incredibly offensive. What struck me first was the blindingly white male cover of this issue. It is GLARINGLY out of date. I would have expected to see a picture like this in the 1950s, or perhaps the 1970s, and it even could have been forgiven in the early 1990s, but it is 2016. Our Virginia State Bar consists of members far beyond the white middle-aged men pictured here. Initially, I gave you the benefit of the doubt. I thought, "this must be some 'fun' way of photographing our bar president and his staff. It's shocking that our bar leadership is all middle-aged white men. We need more diversity in our bar leadership." But, when I flipped to see the article, it is not even about these men as lawyers! It is an article about their "old boy's network." A glaring "in your face" to all lawyers of diversity who are trying to forge their careers in our state and who are facing roadblock after roadblock due to racism and sexism. And,

Letters

Send your letter to the editor to:

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here you are CHAMPIONING IT ON YOUR COVER. This article would be more appropriate in a fraternity magazine than a professional publication. I wish I subscribed to your publication so that I could cancel my subscription in protest.

Kathi Lublin Paul
Charlottesville

Having received *Virginia Lawyer* for years, and honestly not ever recalling seeing a cover representing the diversity of the Virginia bar membership, I shouldn't be taken aback by the August 2016 cover, since it's more of the same. But, in this case, sixfold. They like to surf, take "guy trips" and have silly nicknames for each other. Rather than more of this, I suggest that *Virginia Lawyer* should advance inclusion rather than engender exclusion.

Ann Adams
Evanston, Illinois