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Dear Mr. Askew:

I write to express my disagreement with a proposed change in ABA Standard 603 pertaining to libraries. The proposed standard adds a requirement that the law library director **shall** have both a JD degree **and** a library degree and sound knowledge of an experience in library administration. I know that much of the discussion relates to tenure and long-term contracts for library directors. The revised standard seeks to provide law schools with a certain degree of flexibility in providing security of position for the law library director. However, the requirement that the law library director must have a library degree inappropriately narrows the field of those who could do an outstanding job as library director and inappropriately limits the discretion of a law school in seeking to find the best fit for its library.

For example, the Director of the University of Iowa Law School Library, one of the largest and most comprehensive in the country, is a regular tenured faculty member, Arthur Bonfield. He does not have a library degree. But he is extremely knowledgeable about law library operation, the nature of materials in all formats that it should contain, and has a great appreciation for the services and programs the library should offer to satisfy the educational needs of the law school. He is also a dedicated and forceful advocate for the law library both within the law school and with the University Central Administration. The University and law school administration and the law school faculty and students have been delighted with the information resources in our library and the many services provided them during the 25 years he has served as head of our law library.

I am certain that in practice most library directors will have JDs and library degrees, but I do not see a need to shift from the current standards with its preference for such people to a requirement. Legal education would miss out on a few extraordinary people who can prove to be great library evangelists and great library administrators if a library science degree is made mandatory for such a position. I do not see that our law library has in any way been harmed during the last 25 years by the Director's lack of such a degree. This is an area where the section risks over-regulation in a way that limits law school discretion without any demonstrable compensatory educational or administrative benefit. Each institution should be free to find the very best person to fit its need for a library director without the artificial limit of a mandatory library degree. In most cases, however, they will probably have both law and library degrees, but that should not be made mandatory. I should note, in closing, that the last two librarians of Congress did not have library degrees, and at least one other recently appointed director of a major law library does not have such a degree. In the end, what is most important is not the possession of a library degree but the particular qualifications of an individual to perform the job knowledgeably, effectively, and with vision and commitment.

My best,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Carolyn C. Jones".

Carolyn C. Jones  
Dean and F. Wendell Miller Professor of Law