

AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION**Law Student Division**
321 North Clark Street
Chicago, IL 60654-7598
(312) 988-5624

Dear Chair O'Rourke and Esteemed Members of the Council of the Section of Legal Education and Admissions to the Bar:

Since the Council of the Section of Legal Education and Admissions to the Bar is being inundated by letters from various stakeholders including law students, the ABA Law Student Division Council felt it was fit to weigh in.

The ABA Law Student Division Council met in Vancouver during the ABA Mid-Year meeting and voted unanimously to support either Version 1 or Version 2 of the Employment Questionnaire. The Law Student Division Council's decision is in line with the Standards Review Committee's recommendation. We believe that transparency provides an incredibly important value to law students and that the ABA should continue to move forward in being transparent.

The Law Student Division Council reviewed all the posted letters after the June 2017 vote and for the February 2018 meeting. In particular, we have reviewed the two letters from the Yale Law School student body and George Washington University's student body president. While we also believe that public sector jobs are important for students and that school funding helps students get public sector jobs, we do not believe that law schools should hold public sector funding hostage in return for a change in employment outcome reporting. Like Dean Levi of Duke Law School, we do not understand why disclosure of law school funded jobs actually deters law schools from providing funding. No letter has provided any reason why disclosures disincentivize law schools from funding "bridge to practice" programs or any data that law school funded public interest fellowships have fallen since the changes in 2015. Additionally, we do not understand how less transparency would foster clarity. The Standard Review Committee's survey indicated that prospective students (for whom employment outcomes reporting is vital) desired transparency and were not confused as alleged in the Mahoney memo.

As current law students, the Law Student Division Council agrees with the Standards Review Committee's assessment. The most accurate demonstration of employment figures helps law students make informed decisions on where to attend school. The stratification of employment outcomes is an absolute requirement. Because law school funded jobs are further categorized, concerns that law school funded jobs do not provide a distinction between a law library assistant versus a public interest fellowship are erroneous. If a prospective student sees a long-term law school funded job, a student can be assured that a law school is invested in the success of the student and will support the student. But, a prospective student will also see (and avoid) schools that artificially pump up their employment figures if there are more law school funded jobs than full time employed – bar passage required. We believe that eliminating the separate section for law school funded jobs from employment summary forms would be a step back, cloud the ability to make informed application and enrollment decisions, and ultimately be a disservice to the prospective and current law students this Council aims to protect.

Sincerely,



Thomas E. Kim
Chair, ABA Law Student Division