SPONSORS: Ruthe C. Ashley (Principal Sponsor), Stephen E. Chappelear, Alice A. Bruno, Michael D. Goler, Sebastian Kaplan, Adrienne C. Nelson, Carl D. Smallwood, G. Michael Witte

PROPOSAL: Amends Article 31.7 of the Association’s Bylaws to change the jurisdictional statement of the Standing Committee on Public Education.

Amends Article 31.7 of the Association’s Bylaws to change the number of members for the Standing Committee on Public Education and the Advisory Commission to the Standing Committee.

§31.7 Designation, Jurisdiction, and Special Tenures of Standing Committees.
The designation, jurisdiction, and special tenures of standing committees are as follows:

... Public Education. The Standing Committee on Public Education shall consist of fifteen members, one of whom shall be a designated national Law Day chair, appointed annually by the President, and the chair of the Standing Committee on Gavel Awards, who shall serve ex officio. The Standing Committee shall:

(a) Provide policy direction and oversight for the Division for Public Education and coordinate the activities of its component entities;

(b) Assist Association activities designed to improve public understanding about the law;

(c) Promote activities of, and assist, state and local bar associations, other legal groups, and nonlegal organizations in educating the public about the law; and

(d) Foster and promote comprehensive, multifaceted school and community-based public education programs, including the development and implementation of model public education programs for youth, college and adult audiences.

(Legislative Draft – Additions underlined; deletions struck through)

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(c) Promote activities of, and assist, state and local bar associations, other legal groups, and nonlegal organizations in educating the public about the law; and 

(d) foster and promote multifaceted school and community-based public education programs, including the development and implementation of model public education programs for youth, college, and adult audiences.

In 1997, the House of Delegates created the Advisory Commission to the Standing Committee on Public Education with the following charge:

The Advisory Commission shall consist of fourteen members.

The Advisory Commission membership will include educators and scholars, civic and media leaders, and representatives from new constituencies that public education programs seek to reach.

(Legislative Draft – Additions underlined; deletions struck through)

The Advisory Commission shall consist of fourteen members.

The Advisory Commission membership will include educators and scholars, civic and media leaders, and representatives from new constituencies that public education programs seek to reach.
The Standing Committee on Public Education seeks these changes to its jurisdictional statement to reduce the size of the Committee and its Advisory Commission. In the current budget environment, a reduction in the number of members of the Committee and Commission will significantly reduce expenses for meetings and travel for the Committee and Commission.

In 2018, the budget for meetings was cut to $8,600, which was based on a typical committee size of seven members. The Standing Committee on Public Education does not recommend reducing the size of the Committee and Commission to that level because the Division relies on the larger Standing Committee membership to be advocates and partners in the Division’s outreach and public education programs. Similarly, it wishes to maintain the Advisory Commission at a sufficient size to retain a diverse range of voices of educators, scholars, and other leaders who are audiences for and partners in the work of the Division.

The Standing Committee plans to reach the target numbers over three years by adding fewer members to the Committee and Commission each year as current members finish their three-year terms. The Committee and Commission expects to complete the reduction by the 2021-2022 bar year.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephen Chappelear, Chair
Standing Committee’s Subcommittee on Oversight and Planning