

5010 Buffalo Trail
Madison, WI 53705
February 7, 2014

Supreme Court of Wisconsin
110 E Main, No. 215
P.O. Box 1688
Madison, WI 53703-1688

Re: 13-09 -- The petition of the State Bar of Wisconsin proposing revisions to SCR 10.03(3) and SCR 10.03(5) relating to classes of membership and membership dues and reduction of dues.

Dear Members of the Court:

On January 21, 2014, the Court held hearing into this State Bar petition to impose dues on emeritus lawyers and reduce dues for fourth and fifth year State Bar members. At footnote 1 of my brief I stated:

¹ The Court should be aware that the Board of Governors has also been discussing a general dues increase – perhaps in the \$25-\$50 per member range for the 2014-15 fiscal year – apparently to be acted on after the Court considers this Bar petition. (That dues increase can be accomplished without Court approval.) The Bar’s supporting memorandum does not disclose this development to the Court – stating only (at page 1) that dues for an active member for FY 14 will be \$224 -- perhaps hoping that nondisclosure will increase the chances that the Court will approve this petition.

This prediction proved to be correct, as at the Bar’s meeting of January 31, 2014, the Board of Governors discussed the proposed FY 2015 (2014-15 fiscal year) budget, which included a \$30/member dues increase. The dues increase is expected to provide additional income of just under \$593,000. A final vote on the budget will be taken at the April 25-26, 2014, Board of Governors meeting in La Crosse. It appears that the budget document was available to the State Bar prior to the January 21 hearing in this docket, but the budget was not provided to the Court – for whatever reasons.

This latest development may provide the Court with two additional options: 1. The Court may wish to defer action on this docket until the State Bar adopts its FY 2015 budget in April, after which a clearer picture of the State Bar’s finances will be available. This might provide a more complete basis for the Court to make its decision. 2. In light of the State Bar’s failure to provide the Court with this budget document at or prior to the January 21, 2014, hearing and to be completely forthcoming as to its existence, the Court may wish to dismiss the petition in its entirety.

Respectfully submitted,

Attorney Steven Levine
Cc: State Bar