

**STATE OF WISCONSIN
IN THE SUPREME COURT**

**In the Matter of the Petition to
Amend Supreme Court Rule (SCR)
Chapter 10, Regarding Conduct of
Voting in State Bar Elections and Referenda**

PETITION

19-_____

The State Bar of Wisconsin petitions the Wisconsin Supreme Court to amend Supreme Court Rule 10.08 related to the procedure by which referenda are conducted. The State Bar Board of Governors recently approved modifications to its bylaws as outlined in Article IX Amendment, by a vote of not less than two-thirds of the members of the Board on February 15, 2019. The Board of Governors also approved the filing of this petition by a vote greater than two-thirds on February 15, 2019. A copy of the certification from Executive Director Larry J. Martin is attached to this petition as Appendix A.

The State Bar seeks these changes both to potentially reduce the costs of conducting the elections but also to increase participation in choosing the leaders of the organization. The State Bar conducts annual elections for its officers and the members of the Board of Governors via paper ballots mailed to each eligible voting member. The cost for conducting these elections in 2018 was \$41,487 with the average participation rate for the president-elect election over the past three years of 25%. Under an electronic voting system, eligible member voters will receive an email ballot with a link to secure voting online. Members who do not have an email on file or do not wish to receive electronic communications from the State Bar will continue to receive a paper ballot in the mail.

The State Bar's member divisions have been successfully using an electronic voting system for several years. Those elections have resulted in a modest increase in participation. The State Bar believes combining these elections with State Bar officer elections will only enhance that participation in both elections. In addition, the current vendor has provided a high degree of security to ensure accurate and credible results.

Given advances in and widespread use of technology, and the delays and other challenges experienced in mailing election ballots, electronic voting is a convenient, expected, and cost-effective method for selecting the Association's leadership and associated referenda. The proposed language will not require amendment to accommodate future technological advances.

For your consideration, attached as Appendix A is the State Bar's modifications to Article III of the bylaws.

Respectfully submitted this _____ day of _____, 2019

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