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By electronic mail only to RulesCommittee@jud.ct.gov

November 13, 2020

Honorable Justice Andrew J. McDonald
Connecticut Supreme Court
Chair, Superior Court
Rules Committee
231 Capital Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106

Re: Connecticut Bar Association proposal to Amend Rule 8.4 of the Connecticut Rules of Professional Conduct to define discrimination, harassment and sexual harassment in conduct related to the practice of law as professional misconduct

Dear Justice McDonald,

We write on behalf our respective law firms, legal departments, and legal organizations to urge adoption of the Connecticut Bar Association's proposed Rule 8.4(7).

In 2016, the Connecticut Bar Association began an initiative to bring together legal leaders in the state to enhance diversity and inclusion in the Connecticut legal community. Our firms, legal departments and legal organizations signed the CBA's pledge to advance diversity and inclusion within our own legal organizations and within the Connecticut legal community as a whole. We declared then and have re-affirmed since that a core value of our organizations is to promote diversity and inclusion. In doing so, we pledged to respect the diversity of all individuals, and to create inclusive environments within our legal organizations that allow diverse individuals to succeed, grow, to be respected and valued, contribute to the overall strength of our organizations, and share in the benefits and rewards of those contributions. Diversity, as it is used in the Pledge, is an inclusive concept, one that embraces age, color, ethnicity, familial or marital status, gender identity or expression, language, national origin, physical or mental disability, military or veteran status, race, religion, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic background.

The CBA's proposed rule 8.4(7) is not only consistent with the Pledge but will further our collective goals of making the Connecticut legal community a more equitable and inclusive one. Discrimination, harassment and sexual harassment in professional contexts are deeply harmful to those who experience it, and to the integrity of our profession. As lawyers, we have an obligation to model the highest levels of ethical conduct and professionalism. Discrimination and harassment in professional contexts are inconsistent with that ideal.

The Rules of Professional Conduct state the principles of our profession, and guide and govern our conduct as attorneys. We believe that the proposed rule creates an ethical standard that is appropriate and long overdue. We urge adoption.

Respectfully submitted,



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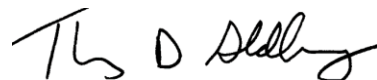
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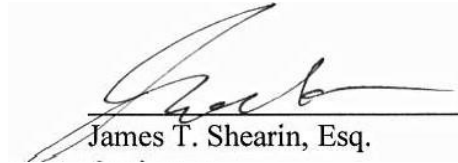
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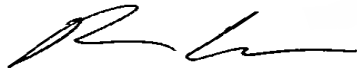
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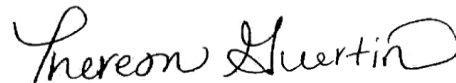
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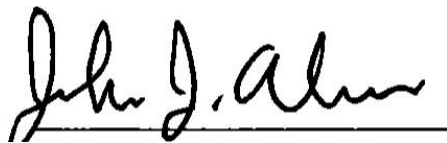
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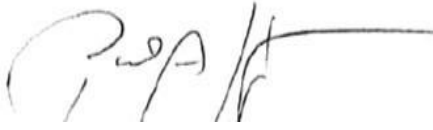
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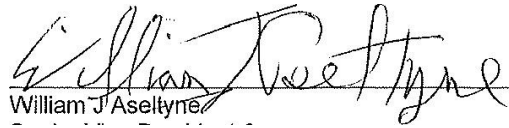
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