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February 26, 2016

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

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Alabama Board of
Bar Commissioners
Alabama State Bar
415 Dexter Avenue
Montgomery, Alabama 36104

Gentlemen:

Re: Report of Task Force on
Raising Bar Dues

I am a member of the above referenced Task Force and have reviewed its Report. With respect, I have a slightly different opinion and would like to submit a "Minority Report." It is my feeling that we should only raise Bar dues by \$25 for the following reasons.

This increase in Bar dues comes at a time when many Alabama lawyers are struggling and an increase may not be well-received by the members of our Bar. Our dues were last raised in 2006 by \$50 to \$300. However, in 2013 we imposed a mandatory client security fund fee of \$25, which raised the cost of a license to \$325, where it is today. It is true that since 2006 the Consumer Price Index is up 18% and the number of Alabama lawyers is up 16%. But, according to the Bar's Economic Survey of Lawyers in 2014, during those years the number of Alabama lawyers making less than \$50,000 has remained roughly the same at about 24%, without any adjustment for inflation. If we picked a mid-range inflation rate of 17% over those years, the cost of a license today over 2006 would suggest that our license should now cost us \$351. If the client security fund fee is included in calculating the total cost of a license, for a license to cost \$351, Bar dues should be increased by \$26.

The Bar budget was about \$4,000,000 in 2006 and is now about \$6,000,000, for an increase of 50% over those years. That is, our Bar budget has increased much faster than either inflation or the increase in the size of our Bar. Our 2015 operating deficit was about \$245,000. A Bar

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dues increase of \$25 should generate about \$340,000 per year.

Therefore, I would suggest an increase in Bar dues of \$25, putting us at \$325, which would make the cost of an Alabama license \$350, when including the Client Security Fund fee. With our license costing \$350, Alabama would be above the cost of a license in Georgia (\$323), Florida (\$265) and Mississippi (\$335).

With best regards, I am

Yours very truly,



Allan R. Chason

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