

NEWS RELEASE

ARIZONA SUPREME COURT

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS

Contact: Heather Murphy
Telephone: (602) 452-3656
Cell: (602) 448-8412
hmurphy@courts.az.gov

August 10, 2015

Draft Report Heralds Possible Changes to State Bar Governance, Comment Sought

PHOENIX – The Task Force on the Review of the Role and Governance Structure of the State Bar of Arizona has posted a draft report on its findings and recommendations. The Task Force, chaired by Justice Rebecca White Berch, met multiple times over the past 13 months to study the structure and function of the State Bar of Arizona, and to consider possible changes to the State Bar’s mission and governance.

“The State Bar of Arizona exists to protect the public. It helps ensure the professionalism and competence of Arizona lawyers. The Task Force report sets forth seven recommendations relating to the State Bar’s mission and governance. The one that seems to have garnered the most public interest is the proposal to reduce the size of the board. Other recommendations include adding terms of office, provisions for removal of board members, and other terms designed to further the public-protection functions of the bar,” Justice Berch said. “We are now seeking public comment on the Task Force’s recommendations.”

Justice Berch said that there is still time for public comment to influence the final report the Task Force will submit to the Supreme Court. Even after the report is submitted, changes would require rulemaking proceedings, which offer additional opportunities for comment.

The draft report is posted at <http://www.azcourts.gov/cscommittees/Task-Force-to-Review-the-State-Bars-Role-and-Governance> or <http://goo.gl/2NM0oZ> (shortened URL). Justice Berch has created a helpful video that summarizes the Task Force’s recommendations.

Public comment on the draft report can be submitted by email to BarGovernance@courts.az.gov.

Chief Justice Bales entered an Administrative Order establishing the Task Force in July 2014. The Order directed the Task Force to submit its findings and recommendations, including any proposed rule changes, to the Supreme Court by September 1, 2015.

###