

STATE BAR OF TEXAS

TREY APFFEL
PRESIDENT



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September 22, 2014

Ms. Nina Hess Hsu
General Counsel
Supreme Court of Texas
P.O. Box 12248
Austin, TX 78711

Dear Ms. Hess Hsu:

The State Bar of Texas has reviewed the biennial report of the Grievance Oversight Committee and has received and reviewed a copy of the letter from the Commission for Lawyer Discipline and Chief Disciplinary Counsel commenting on the report.

The efficient and effective operation of the disciplinary system is a central purpose of the State Bar, and it is essential to support public confidence in the legal system and ensure that the lawyers of Texas live up to their ethical standards.

Regarding the Committee's recommendation that the State Bar seek to include attorneys with immigration experience on local grievance panels, this is something the State Bar does strive for in the appointment process and we agree that it is essential. We will continue to work with CDC to ensure attorneys with immigration experience are appointed. The Committee also recommended attorney education on identifying and handling non-refundable retainers. We agree that education on this subject is essential and note that the topic is covered in CDC's "A Lawyer's Guide to Client Trust Accounts" pamphlet, available on TexasBar.com. The State Bar will continue to work with CDC to promote and disseminate this information among members and cover this topic in CLE presentations and other media.

At this time, having reviewed the Commission and CDC's response, the State Bar has no additional comments regarding the biennial report. We commend and thank the Grievance Oversight Committee for its thorough and crucial work in reviewing the disciplinary system. We are also grateful to the Commission, the CDC and its staff, and our many volunteer grievance panel members for their tireless work.

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The State Bar and its board of directors will continue to work closely with the Commission and CDC as they refine and improve the disciplinary process.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,


Trey Apffel



CC: Justice Phil Johnson
Justice Jeffrey V. Brown
Stan Serwatka
Guy Harrison
Linda Acevedo