

Supreme Court of Florida

500 South Duval Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1925

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CLERK OF COURT

SILVESTER DAWSON
MARSHAL

November 6, 2019

Mr. John M. Stewart
President
The Florida Bar
651 E Jefferson Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399

Dear John:

Thank you for your letter of September 27, 2019, concerning a potential study of issues related to the regulation of the legal profession in Florida. In your letter you suggest a “study into whether and how the rules governing the practice of law in Florida may be revised to improve the delivery of legal services to Florida’s consumers and to assure Florida lawyers play a proper and prominent role in the provision of these services.”

As discussed in your letter, the environment in which legal services are provided has been rapidly changing. In view of that changing environment, the challenges facing Florida lawyers, and the difficulties that many Floridians encounter in securing legal services, the Court agrees that The Florida Bar should conduct a study of the rules governing the practice of law to ensure that our regulation meets the needs of Floridians for legal services while also protecting against misconduct and maintaining the strength of Florida’s legal profession.

As you have suggested, the topics that should be addressed in this study include the following: lawyer advertising; referral fees; fee splitting; entity

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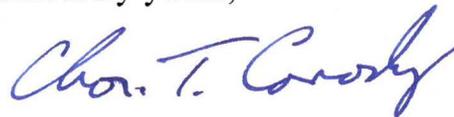
regulation; regulation of online service providers; and regulation of nonlawyer providers of limited legal services. Additional topics consistent with the subject of the study may also be addressed.

The Court requests that this study be undertaken by a study group chaired and appointed by you. The work of the study group should begin by January 2020 and should be completed by July 1, 2021. Quarterly reports of the study group's work should be submitted to the Court and to the Board of Governors of The Florida Bar. A final report, including recommendations for any rule changes or other actions, should be submitted no later than July 1, 2021, to the Board of Governors and the Court.

In fulfilling the Court's responsibility under Article V, section 15 of the Florida Constitution "to regulate . . . the discipline of persons admitted" "to the practice of law," we are committed to ensuring a strong and vibrant Bar to meet the legal needs of the people of Florida and to enforcing appropriate ethical standards for Florida lawyers. The foundation of our efforts in this arena is the recognition that The Florida Bar exists to serve the people of our state. We believe that the study we are asking the Bar to undertake can assist us in carrying out this important constitutional responsibility.

The Court is grateful to you for your leadership in this important initiative. We look forward to receiving updates on the work of the study group as well as the final report that will result from the study group's labors.

Sincerely yours,



Charles T. Canady

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