

**IN THE FLORIDA SUPREME COURT**

**No. SC21-284**

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IN RE: AMENDMENTS TO  
RULE REGULATING THE FLORIDA BAR 6-10.3.

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COMMENTS OF LAW SCHOOL DEANS

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The undersigned law school deans urge the Court's reconsideration of recent amendments to Florida Bar Rule 6-10.3(d), which would deny Continuing Legal Education (CLE) credit for educational programming developed under requirements that presenters reflect the diversity of the legal profession.

On the west pediment of the United States Supreme Court building are the foundational words, "Equal Justice Under Law." These words are the embodiment of the justice that we seek as Americans – justice fairly applied regardless of status or station. This fundamental principle guides bench and bar in all that we do. Making good on the promise of equal justice under law within a diverse populace requires diversity in the profession and on the bench and exposing students and lawyers to diverse perspectives. That is why law schools and bar associations embrace diversity goals. Moreover,

these efforts promote more effective representation of clients in an increasingly diverse society.

We, the undersigned law deans, oppose the Court's recent amendments to Rule 6-10.3(d) because these amendments undermine the profession's ability to achieve equal justice under law. The goals of the ABA policy for panelists on CLE programs are to "eliminate bias" and "promote full and equal participation" in the justice system. CLE panels that do not represent the diversity of the profession fail to live up to this standard. Moreover, a lack of diversity of persons in practice and in judicial positions reduces public trust and confidence in our justice system and in the rule of law.

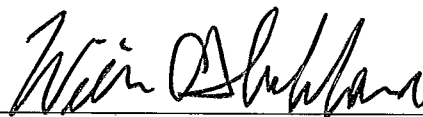
Law schools are aligned with the courts and the organized bar in promoting greater diversity in the profession and thereby enhancing the public's trust and confidence in the justice system. Through the Law Deans Antiracist Clearinghouse Project, law school deans nationwide have committed to "auditing our programs of legal education to assess our progress toward diversifying our faculties, our staff, and especially our student bodies, which in turn diversify our profession." The American Bar Association's Diversity & Inclusion CLE Policy, which promotes diversity in CLE programs,

accomplishes goals that are consistent with efforts of law schools throughout the country to provide greater diversity in, access to, and fairness in our justice system. Many members of law school faculties participate as presenters in ABA CLE programs and view their participation as important public service.

We believe that denying CLE credit for programs that require diversity is both unnecessary and unfair to lawyers who seek to improve their legal skills to better serve their clients and augment their competency. We urge the Court to reconsider the amendments to Florida Bar Rule 6-10.3(d).

July 13, 2021

Respectfully submitted,



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