

# **PROPOSED STATE BAR OF MICHIGAN POLICY ON DUES WAIVER FOR MEMBERS SERVING IN THE MILITARY**

## **Issue**

Should the Representative Assembly recommend adoption of the following policy to the State Bar of Michigan:

“Any member who, on October 1 of each year, is serving in the U.S. Armed Forces in active duty status, upon request and upon providing supporting documentation of such service, shall not be required to pay State Bar of Michigan membership dues, including the Attorney Discipline System fee and the Client Security Fund assessment. A waiver of dues does not relieve a member of his or her duty to meet the State Bar’s ethical requirements. Requests for dues waiver under this policy must be made for each year, and will be granted no more than a total of four times.”

## **Synopsis**

This proposed policy supports the American Bar Association resolution adopted by the House of Delegates in August 2007. The ABA resolution urges bar associations and other appropriate regulatory bodies to adopt a policy that provides for the waiver or suspension of association dues, CLE requirements and other membership obligations for members who are serving in the U.S. Armed Forces in a Combat Zone as designated by an Executive Order of the President of the United States.

The proposed SBM policy does not limit the waiver of dues to those serving in a designated Combat Zone. To minimize administrative costs associated with oversight of this policy, the dues waiver would be extended to any member in an active duty status. The request for waiver of dues may be granted a total of four times for a member.

## **Opposition**

None known.

## **Fiscal Impact to State Bar of Michigan**

While the exact number of members who may be eligible for this waiver is not known, based on the limited information that we have available in our database and the experience of other bar associations with such a policy, it is estimated that no more than 50 members would be in the waived status for any one year. The fiscal impact of 50 members would be:

\$9,000 State Bar of Michigan  
\$6,000 Attorney Discipline System  
\$ 750 Client Security Fund

**Operational Implementation**

This policy would become operational for Fiscal Year 2009. Notice of the policy would be on the dues statement sent to members in September 2008.

**STATE BAR OF MICHIGAN POSITION  
By vote of the Representative Assembly on April 12, 2008**

Should the Representative Assembly recommend adoption of the above proposed policy?

(a) Yes

or

(b) No