



ACCESS TO JUSTICE BC

October 8, 2018

Miriam Kresivo QC,
President
Law Society of British Columbia
845 Cambie Street
Vancouver BC V6B 4Z9

Dear Ms. Kresivo:

Re: Family Law Legal Services Providers: Consultation Paper

At its meeting on September 28, 2018, the Access to Justice BC Steering Committee discussed the response of some of the legal profession to the Law Society's invitation to provide input into the Alternate Legal Service Provider Working Group's consultation paper. I was asked by the Steering Committee to write this letter to you to convey the Steering Committee's consensus that the issues raised in your consultation paper deserve a fulsome and respectful dialogue.

The proposal of your committee is obviously directed at improving access to justice – a way to meet the unmet need for legal services. Encouraging action by justice system stakeholders to improve access to justice is central to Access to Justice BC's mandate. The Steering Committee thinks it is important to continue to frame the issue raised by your consultation paper as an access to justice issue. Implications for quality control, public protection and viability of business models are also, of course, important, and a full airing of these issues may lead to modifications that will strengthen the proposal.

Your consultation process is an invitation for input. Access to Justice BC does not intend (at least at this stage) to take a substantive position on the proposal, which is obviously controversial for some. The Steering Committee is aware of the Members Resolution that appears to want to shut down discussion of the proposal. In the Committee's view, the better course of action would be to expand, rather than reduce, the time set for the consultation process - to create space for a full and frank dialogue, engaging not just lawyers but other interested individuals and groups in considering this important access to justice proposal and the issues it raises.

If your committee sees a useful role for Access to Justice BC in encouraging a full dialogue, the Steering Committee would be pleased to consider it. Feel free to contact me via email at jane@janemorley.com.

Yours sincerely,

Jane Morley, QC
Strategic Coordinator, Access to Justice BC

c.c. Caroline Nevin, Executive Director, Canadian Bar Association British Columbia