

MARK JACOB MORRIS

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Region	Incumbency	Slate or Coalition Affiliation	Law Association Membership
Toronto	Not An Incumbent	Unaffiliated	None

LiRN Funding and Libraries	
Will you support the Law Society maintaining its current level of funding for LiRN, adjusted annually for inflation?	Yes
Do you recognize the importance of the Law Society’s support for the LiRN budget in maintaining licensee competence across Ontario?	Yes
Legal resources and access to case law is the bedrock of a functional legal system. Case law and access to legal materials is often expensive and providing wider access is a requirement for a functional, transparent and therefore fair legal system. In my professional life, I contribute actively to a variety of education systems as a professor of Law and I am acutely aware of the need for accessible legal resources for both students and the general public. That same commitment to education would drive my decision in this area as well.	
If you are an incumbent, do you regret voting to cut the LiRN budget by 10% in November 2020?	N/A
N/A - not an incumbent.	
Do you support offloading funding for LiRN/law libraries to the Law Foundation of Ontario?	No
I support the funding mechanism that has been in place for LiRN's existence. I have not seen a compelling reason to amend that funding formula at this time.	

Legal Aid Funding	
Will you advocate for Legal Aid Ontario funding improvement and sustainability to ensure that being a Legal Aid-empanelled lawyer remains a viable area of practice for the private bar?	Yes
👉 If you answered “yes”, how?	
I do not have an answer to this question as all funding involves trade-offs and I am unaware of the budgetary trade-offs individual funding decisions will require at the present time. Having said that, I have always viewed the provision of legal aid by our profession as fundamental to our commitment to deliver justice to Ontarians. Early in my career, while in Government, I was a strong proponent of, and did in fact assist the Attorney General as his policy advisor in increasing the level of government funding to legal aid Ontario. I have not changed in my views that legal funding of this program is a critical part of our collective professional obligations. In sum, any decision I do make will start from the position that this program is a priority.	
Please describe efforts that you believe should be undertaken by the Law Society to advocate for investment in LAO and increased financial allocation to LAO from the provincial and federal governments’ budgets.	
It is a sad reality that increased LAO funding, while meritorious in its own right, is not a political win for Governments - political parties simply do not see electoral success through the path of increasing LAO funding. Accordingly, to be successful in increasing financial allocations, LAO funding prioritization needs to be strategic and timely. I have been active in Provincial politics, first as a staffer and later as a registered Government Lobbyist. I am acutely aware of the necessity of approaching Governments at the right time and with the right message. Omnibus justice bills are ideal for such an approach and more recently, Covid 19 Justice initiatives provided such cover. When those opportunities arise, and Governments turn to the LSO for its backing in order to clear the way through the legislature, our accession to those packages should come with the price of a new better formula for LAO funding, annually adjusted to avoid having to go back to the drawing board every couple of years.	

Paralegal Scope of Practice	
On December 1, 2022, Convocation approved the Family Legal Service Provider (FLSP) license to allow paralegals who complete specified training to assist clients with certain family law services. The FLSP is to be reviewed in 3 years. Should paralegals’ scope of practice be expanded?	
It should be expanded no further than the FLSP	
👉 If you answered “yes”, in what ways, why, and what additional training (if any) should be required of paralegals?	
No response was required, but the candidate wrote: I would like to see where the FLSP project goes before taking a position on where it should go next. As a matter of course, I do strongly believe that there is an important role that Paralegals play in providing access to justice for Ontarians and so I do hope that the FLSP project is a success that can help craft future initiatives in this area.	
Lawyer licensees pay an annual competency levy as part of their annual fees that contributes towards LiRN, which funds courthouse libraries. Would you support a requirement for paralegals to also pay an annual competency levy?	Yes
Paralegals and Lawyers have the same interest in seeing LiRN properly funded. There is no reason that annual fees should not be allocated from both sections of the Bar.	

Law Association Involvement	
When did you become a member of each of the associations you selected above? Which board or executive roles, if any, have you served in as part of these associations? Please list relevant dates and roles.	
Not a member of a county or district law association.	
Why are you a member of each of the associations you selected above?	
Not a member of a county or district law association.	