

MARGARET WADDELL

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Region	Incumbency	Slate or Coalition Affiliation	Law Association Membership
Toronto	Not An Incumbent	Good Governance Coalition	Toronto

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
As a former TLA President, I am intimately familiar with the important function that LiRN plays in ensuring the competency of the legal profession. Law Libraries have been and will continue to be the primary source of legal information for the vast majority of licensees (and the public). LiRN ensures that the resources are in place to maintain and enhance legal competence. LiRN provides the ability for Libraries to share resources, and reduce overhead costs. As resource costs increase, it is essential that LiRN remain fully funded to provide appropriate and necessary information resources to all areas of the province.	
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
While funding libraries was one of the possible uses of the Law Foundation's funds, it has historically not done so, and it makes little sense to turn to the Foundation for funding now. The Law Foundation's resources are appropriately focused on access to justice initiatives that support the public good, in keeping with its mission. Lawyers are able to and should continue to finance and support Law Libraries through a portion of their annual fees. The Libraries are available to and used broadly by licensees, and are necessary for licensees to fulfill their roles competently. Having all licensees pay towards maintaining the Libraries is equitable, and enhances competency across the profession. If funding was offloaded to the Law Foundation, this would leave the Libraries in serious jeopardy, given the uncertainty of funding, the competing demands on the Foundations' limited resources, and its priority mandate to enhance access to justice. It is, in my view, naïve to think that the Foundation could and would be able to adequately fund Law Libraries and fulfill its other important functions. It cannot do both without further financial inputs from the profession. Which, of course, begs the question about offloading. Maintaining functional Libraries is a part of legal professionalism.	

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?	
Legal Aid funding comes primarily from the provincial government, and secondarily from the federal government for limited purposes (and the Law Foundation also supports it). Maintaining strong lines of open and receptive, not combative, communication with the Ministry of the Attorney General about the essential character of Legal Aid, and the democratic imperative of maintaining a viable legal aid program is the best means of ensuring its continued sustainable funding.	
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.	
Increased funding for the LAO is a difficult and delicate issue that is not easily accomplished, particularly given the substantial cut in funding that was imposed on the LAO by the current provincial government in 2019, despite substantial pushback from the LSO and lawyer organizations including FOLA and TLA. That said, the LSO's mandate includes maintaining and advancing the cause of justice and the rule of law, as well as facilitating access to justice, so engaging in strong advocacy with both levels of government is appropriate, and called for here. Effective advocacy will require objective data that can be used to refute the provincial government's view that no additional spending is needed. Pointing to the mayhem that arose in AB as a result of the public defenders' recent strike, and the fact that an interim increase of 25% was agreed to by that conservative government may also assist in such negotiations.	

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: Too many individuals with family law issues are self-represented because they cannot afford legal representation. They are unaware of their rights and responsibilities. The FLSP is intended to help address this gaping hole in the provision of legal services where it is needed the most. Assuming that paralegals are provided with appropriate and adequate training, then having paralegals provide this limited and narrow area of assistance to an otherwise unserved population who need legal advice is an important step to enhancing access to justice and protection of individuals when they are at their most vulnerable.	
I understand that a curriculum is currently being developed by several colleges and will be vetted by the LSO before any program is accredited. This supplementary and specialized training is essential for paralegals who want to practice in this area, so that they are able to provide appropriate and competent advice, and so that they understand the limits to the advice they can provide, as well as the serious consequences to the clients that can flow from a failure to identify issues that are beyond the scope of their practice 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 can and should be making use of the legal resources available at Law Libraries to meet and maintain their professional competency requirements. They should therefore also be contributing to the costs of obtaining and maintaining those resources. That said, given the limited scope of practice for paralegals, many of the resources provided by LiRN will not be useful to their practices. Accordingly, any competency levy paid by paralegals should be only a percentage of that paid by lawyer licensees.	

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.	
I became a TLA member in or around 1992. I joined the TLA Board in or about 2007, and joined the Executive in 2014. I was president in 2019/20.	
Why are you a member of each of the associations you selected above?	
I believe that it is an important part of my responsibility to the legal profession to be an active member of the organizations that advocate for the profession, and that provide the essential services that lawyers rely upon, such as education, mentoring and training, networking, and representation with government organizations and the judiciary. The TLA is the grassroots representative organization for lawyers practicing in the Greater Toronto Area. It operates the library at 361 University and provides vital practice-enhancing services and programming. The TLA understands and advocates for the diverse needs of its broad-based constituency, i.e. lawyers from all practice areas. Being a member of this organization provides community and connections, and allows me to more effectively advocate for other local lawyers to make the practice more fulfilling and meaningful and helps me to provide the best services to my clients.	