

Name: Thomas Howlett

I strongly support the State Bar of Michigan's request for an \$80 increase to the license fee, and I urge the Supreme Court to adopt the request in full.

The request for an \$80 increase made by the Bar is the product of a years-long undertaking by serious-minded attorneys and staff working on behalf of the Bar and the profession. It is based on a careful, detailed, data-driven, reasoned analysis of what increase is needed -- after 18 years without an increase -- to ensure that legal profession and the public continue to receive the services and benefits that are hallmarks of the Bar in this State.

I am concerned that the Court is considering a license fee increase of \$50. Approving only a lower increase of \$50 would effectively penalize the Bar for not having requested license fee increases during the last 18 years.

Deciding on "50 instead of 80" has the appearance of the type of compromise that might arise out of jury deliberations. Some juries arrive at their numbers based on careful review of arguments and counterarguments. Other juries decide outcomes based on random factors unrelated to facts. Here, there appears to be no good counterargument argument and no data supporting why, after 18 years without any license fee increase whatsoever, only a \$50 increase is the right outcome, in light of the detailed information presented by the Bar to the Court.