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Attorney at Law
206 Primera Drive
San Antonio, Texas 78212

August 4, 2020

Mr. Randy Sorrels
Mr. Jerry Alexander
Nominations & Elections Committee
State Bar of Texas

RE: Statement of Interest to Serve as President of the State Bar of Texas

Dear Mr. Sorrels and Mr. Alexander:

Most Important Issues Facing the State Bar of Texas--I watched the Special Meeting of the Board of Directors with a heavy heart; but also, with great pride and respect for our SBOT members and leaders. As a former Director, I had great empathy for the Directors who were called into executive session to determine how to respond to the passionate voices and extensive written statements of our members addressing a serious issue challenging the integrity of State Bar of Texas leadership.

Attorneys are the embodiment of the third branch of government--the judiciary. Attorneys should not only defend "justice for all" and "equal treatment under the law", we must embody and stand for these rights. SBOT leaders are now charged with implementing a plan to address the divide and marginalization experienced by SBOT members based upon race, gender, sexual preference, and members working a program of recovery from addiction. I want to be part of the solution and will advocate for meaningful change with lightning speed. I strongly support, and would like to be a part of, President-Elect Sylvia Borunda Firth's committee on diversity, equality and inclusion and recommend that her committee have the resources to cause immediate results.

The consequences of COVID is another issue facing the State Bar. Attorneys are experiencing social isolation and economic challenges. Holding mediations, hearings, and bar sponsored events on zoom may be a substitute but not an answer. Attorneys are most effective when they can meet with their clients and opposing counsel, advocate before judges, and interact with their colleagues. The SBOT must be a leader in providing safe practices when CLE programs and bar-related activities move from zoom to on-site locations. In the meantime, the SBOT must continue to provide resources to attorneys during these challenging times.

Why I Want to Serve as State Bar President—My life experiences and legal career qualify me to relate to all 105,000 plus licensed Texas attorneys, whether they are practicing at major Texas law firms or as solo practitioners, civil law attorneys or criminal law attorneys, and those who work for legal aid providers or major corporations. I describe my law practice as a "people's practice" and myself as a "people's lawyer". After working with a law firm that represented savings and loan associations in the 1980's, I started my own law practice in 1990.

While I learned how to practice commercial real estate law at the law firm, I learned survival as a sole practitioner. My message to Texas attorneys is that there is no substitute for hard work and providing the highest quality legal services at a fair rate. I am an advocate for State Bar CLE courses. My ability to provide the “highest quality legal services” has been enhanced by attending State Bar CLE courses and being a presenter and contributor. The added bonus I have experienced from presenting at State Bar CLE programs is respect from colleagues throughout Texas; not to mention a number of client referrals.

Vital interests that I would address as State Bar President include:

1. I strongly support on-going efforts on diversity, equality, and inclusion. All Texas attorneys should experience “getting more out of service than you give”. Opportunities for service on the SBOT board of directors, committees, CLE courses, and sections, and the many other ways to be involved, especially at the local bar level, must be expanded. Bar leaders can seek out others in ways as simple as “bring a colleague to a bar meeting; recruit a colleague to join a committee.” SBOT resources could be used to “scale” programs like SBOT Leadership and REPTL Leadership Academy for other State Bar sections and local bar associations. Less experienced attorneys could be invited to join committees like the Real Estate Forms Committee as “mentee members” to learn from and assist the more senior members of the committees.
2. I believe that one of the best ways for attorneys to own “justice for all” and “equal treatment under the law” is to deliver “access to justice”. How can we understand what struggles others who are less fortunate are experiencing, if we are not willing to meaningfully engage? We are licensed and qualified to provide legal services to those who cannot afford to pay for legal services. My focus will be to create innovated and “user-friendly” ways for attorneys to provide pro bono services. Our recent “remote wills clinic for first responders” offered by the San Antonio Legal Services Association is an excellent example of how to enhance attorney participation. Over a weekend, 37 volunteer attorneys went to over 200, and then almost 400 attorney volunteers, because the “ask” was very “user-friendly”.
3. The consequences of COVID, including social isolation and economic challenges, will result in more attorneys struggling with anxiety, depression, and addictions. TLAP’s message of “confidential help for attorneys experiencing addictive behavior” should be loud and often. Every year the SBOT should commit more resources to TLAP. I am a passionate advocate for TLAP and a proud member of Texas Lawyers’ Concerned for Lawyers for nearly two decades. I have given TLAP presentations at State Bar CLE programs and served as a monitoring attorney for the Texas Board of Law Examiners. I have publicly put a “face on recovery” as a successful attorney who recognized a life-threatening issue and sought help. My message will be “it is not enough to call for a ride when under the influence, please call for help—TLAP (1-800-343-8527)”.

Thank you for your consideration.

Very truly yours,


SARA E. DYSART

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**Board Certified Commercial Real Estate Law
Texas Board of Legal Specialization**

EDUCATION

St. Mary's University School of Law, J.D., *with distinction*, May 1981

University of Texas at San Antonio, Master of Arts, May 1977

St. Mary's University, Bachelor of Arts, *magna cum laude*, May 1974

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS AND AWARDS

Texas Bar Foundation 2020 Terry Lee Grantham Memorial Award

St. Mary's University 2019 Distinguished Graduate

San Antonio Business Journal 2018 Outstanding Lawyer

Association of Corporate Counsel South Texas Chapter

2017 C. Lee Cusenbary Ethical Life Award

State Bar of Texas Presidents' Award 2016

State Bar of Texas Presidential Citation 2015

TexasBarCLE's "Standing Ovation Award" 2015

Bexar County Women's Bar Foundation Belva Lockwood Outstanding Attorney Award 2015

San Antonio Bar Foundation Peacemaker Award 2014

State Bar of Texas Advanced Real Estate Weatherbie Workhorse Award 2013

State Bar of Texas Lawyers Concerned for Lawyers Ralph Mock Memorial Award 2012

San Antonio Bar Association President's Award 2007, 2012 & 2015

Co-Chair of the SBOT Annual Meeting 2015

State Bar of Texas Director 2012 – 2015

Texas Bar College Board of Directors (2019-2022)

American College of Real Estate Lawyers 2011 – present

Guardian Member of the Texas Access to Justice Society, Texas Access to Justice Commission

Texas Board of Legal Specialization Real Estate Law Advisory Commission 2015 – 2021

Texas Board of Legal Specialization Real Estate Law Exam Commission 2015 - 2021

State Bar of Texas Real Estate, Probate & Trust Law Section Council Member 2011 - 2015

Texas Bar Foundation Trustee (2015-2018); Sustaining Life Fellow (Fellow since 1991)

Co-Chair of District 10 Fellows Nominating Committee 2013 - 2014

State Bar of Texas - Real Estate Forms Committee 2004 – present/ (Chair 2018-2020)

State Bar of Texas Lawyers Concerned for Lawyers Committee; Chair 2009 – 2010

San Antonio Bar Foundation - Chair 1998 – 1999

State Bar of Texas District 10 PEP Grievance Committee Chair 1998-1999

San Antonio Bar Association - Treasurer 1991 - 1992; 1996 -1997; Director 2010 -2012

San Antonio Bar Association Real Estate Section Chair 2013 – present

San Antonio Real Estate Discussion Group Chair 2005 - present

Bexar County Women's Bar Association - Treasurer 1989

St. Mary's University School of Law Board of Visitors 2016- 2021 (Chair 2018-2021)

St. Mary's Law Alumni Association - President 1991 - 1992

St. Mary's University Board of Trustees - Trustee - 1992 – 1993

Texas Monthly Super Lawyer for numerous years
Briefing Attorney for the 4th Court of Appeals 1981 - 1982

COMMUNITY COMMITMENT

St. Mary's University Board of Trustees
Broadway Bank Board of Directors
San Antonio Council on Alcohol and Drug Awareness Advisory Board (Chair)
Real Estate Founders' Council, UTSA
San Antonio River Foundation Board of Directors
Impact San Antonio
United Way Women's Leadership Council

PUBLICATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS INCLUDE

Member of Planning Committees for many Texas BarCLE real estate law courses
Course Director 41st Annual Advanced Real Estate Law Course, State Bar of Texas, 2019
Course Director 27th Annual Advance Real Estate Drafting, State Bar of Texas 2016
Course Director, 4th Annual Real Estate Strategies Course, State Bar of Texas, 2010
Course Co-Director, 30th Annual Advanced Real Estate Law Course, State Bar of Texas, 2008

A Walk Down Bad Deed Lane, 42nd Annual Advanced Real Estate Law Course, State Bar of Texas, July 2020.

Board Certified in Real Estate Law—Me? Real Estate Law 101, State Bar of Texas, July 2020.

When All Else Fails Read the Manual--the Real Estate Forms Manual, 20th Annual Advanced Drafting Course, State Bar of Texas, March 2019

Revisions to Real Estate Documents Based Upon 2017 Legislative Changes, 29th Annual Advanced Drafting Course, State Bar of Texas, March 2018

Tenant Estoppel Certificate and SNDA from a Tenant's Perspective, 28th Annual Advanced Drafting Course, State Bar of Texas, March 2017

Reservation or Exception, What Is It Going To Be?, Texas Land Title Institute, December 2016

The Visual Rights Act of 1990 Collides with Real Estate Ownership, American College of Real Estate Attorneys, March 2016

Seller Should Provide Accurate Statutory Notices Incident to the Sale of Real Property, 37nd Annual Advanced Real Estate Course, State Bar of Texas, July 2015

Loan Documents as an Operations Manual, 48th Annual William C. Gibson, Jr., Mortgage Lending Institution, University of Texas School of Law, September 2014

Drafting Seller Financing Documents, 25th Annual Advanced Drafting Course, State Bar of Texas, March 2014

Negotiating Loan Documents- Post 2008, 24th Annual Advanced Drafting Course, State Bar of Texas, March 2013

Texas Probate Code Redefines Secured Creditor's Rights and Remedies (Clarified by 2011 Amendments), 32nd Annual Advanced Real Estate Course, State Bar of Texas, July 2012

Buyer at Foreclosure (New Meaning to "Buyer Beware"), 44th Annual William C. Gibson, Jr., Mortgage Lending Institution, University of Texas School of Law, September 2010

Maturity Dates, Defaults, and Refinancing Options, 32nd Annual Advanced Real Estate Course, State Bar of Texas, July 2010

Mandatory Disclosure Notices Incident to the Sale of Real Property, 21st Annual Advanced Drafting Course, March State Bar of Texas, March 2010

Deed in Lieu of Foreclosure and Other Workout Options, 43rd Annual William C. Gibson, Jr., Mortgage Lending Institution, University of Texas School of Law, September 2009

Workouts Including Forebearance Agreements, Reinstatement Agreements, Short Sales, and Deeds in Lieu of Foreclosure, 31st Annual Advanced Real Estate Law Course, State Bar of Texas, July 2009

Workouts Including Forebearance Agreements, Reinstatement Agreements, Short Sales, and Deeds in Lieu, 31st Annual Advanced Real Estate Law Course, State Bar of Texas July 2009

Planning for Defaults, Workouts, and Foreclosures, 20th Annual Advanced Real Estate Drafting Course, State Bar of Texas, March 2009

Accepting and Delivering a Deed in Lieu of Foreclosure, 42nd Annual William C. Gibson, Jr., Mortgage Lending Institute, University of Texas School of Law, September 2008

The Impact of the Texas Supreme Court's Adoption of Section 87(1)(A) of the Restatement (Second) of Contracts, 19th Annual Advanced Drafting Course, State Bar of Texas, March 2008

Attorney Acting as a Substitute Trustee in a Non-Judicial Foreclosure Sale, 18th Annual Advanced Real Estate Drafting Course, State Bar of Texas, March 2007

Texas Probate Code Redefines Secured Creditor's Rights and Remedies, 41st Annual William C. Gibson, Jr., Mortgage Lending Institute, University of Texas School of Law, September 2006.

Impact of Loan Documents on the Borrower, 26th Annual Advanced Real Estate Law Course, State Bar of Texas, July 2004

A POTPOURRI OF ISSUES: Accelerated Rent, Preserving a Guarantor's Liability and Non-Recourse Provisions for Landlord Tenant, Real Estate Law: Leases In-Depth, SMU School of Law, March 1997

Atom Bomb Review of a Deed of Trust in Commercial Lending (from the Borrower's Perspective), Real Estate Law: Mortgages in Depth, SMU School of Law, January 1993

Earnest Money Contracts for the Purchaser of Raw Land (Reviewed from a Buyer's Perspective), Workouts and Closings, University of Houston CLE Course, March 1991 and March 1992

Partial Release Clauses and Subordination Agreements: The Consequences of Drafting Unclear Provisions, 3rd Annual Advanced Real Estate Drafting Course, State Bar of Texas, January 1991

The Effect of Foreclosure on Other Liens and Encumbrances, St. Mary's Eleventh Annual Procedural Law Institute, Foreclosure Litigation, November 1989

The Continued Existence of Deeds in Lieu of Foreclosure, State Bar of Texas, 11th Annual Advanced Real Estate Law Course, May 1989

The Power of Sale – The Heart and Soul of a Deed of Trust, Real Estate Law: Mortgages in Depth Program, SMU School of Law, January 1989

Basics of Negotiating Deeds of Trust and Other Real Estate Security Documents, State Bar of Texas, 9th Annual Real Estate Law Course, May 1987

Real Estate Documents, Symposium Editor, Real Estate Finance --An Emphasis on Texas Law, St. Mary's Law Journal, Vol. 12, No. 4 (1981)

Comment, USLTA: Article 5 A Construction Liens Analyzed in Light of Current Texas Law on Mechanic's and Materialmen's Liens, 12 St. Mary's L.J. 113 (1980)