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TRACIE LINDSEMAN
CLERK OF SUPREME COURT
BY *[Signature]*
CLERK DEPUTY CLERK

VIA FACSIMILE TO 775.684.1755

Chief Justice Michael Cherry
Justice Ron Parraguire
Justice Nancy Saitta
Justice Kristina Pickering
Supreme Court Of Nevada
201 South Carson Street, No. 300
Carson City, NV 89701
0478

Justice James Hardesty
Justice Michael Douglas
Justice Mark Gibbons

Re: ADKT No. 0578 - CLE on Substance Abuse, Mental Health Issue or Addictive Disorders

Dear Justices:

As I have ruminated about yesterday's hearing on ADKT 0578 and the concerns raised, I feel compelled to supplement my remarks.

First, I must explain my own motivation of coming before the all of you, the most respected members of the State Bar of Nevada, and revealing the family secret about David that I have kept hidden now for so long. My motivator is that last May, I lost the son I had with David Pancoast to an accidental overdose. Max, like his Father, was gregarious, intelligent, witty and simply delightful. He was also adept at hiding his demons. As I have tried to make sense of this loss, I've come to the conclusion that nothing can be worse than losing a son in such a senseless way. But I have decided if by speaking out about mental health issues and addiction issues I might save another marriage, another child, or another colleague from this same fate then something good has come of something so terrible. That is why I stood before you yesterday and told you about David.

Through education and public awareness it is now common knowledge that smoking is hazardous to your health, that diabetes and heart disease can be addressed with lifestyle changes. That awareness came as a result of people talking about the issues. The awareness came with education and a deeper understanding of the role of genetics, lifestyle, exercise and nutrition. Women are to go for yearly mammograms with the sole goal of catching cancer early, the earlier a disease is caught, the higher the likelihood of successful treatment. What is good for the body is good for the mind.

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From my perspective, ADKT 0578 is simply a tool to raise awareness, understanding and facilitate early prevention of mental health and/or addiction problems. The proposed CLE is simply a vehicle to opening a dialogue about issues that are well hidden until the problem gets so bad that marriages dissolve or careers are demolished. Perhaps, if there were a greater awareness and understanding of depression, anxiety or addiction, then the stigma associated with such conditions will gradually dissipate. If the stigma goes away, then the willingness to acknowledge the problem will increase. ADKT 0578 is simply a means of acknowledging issues that are tearing families apart and literally, killing people. It is a forum where the reality that suicide is the 10th leading cause of death in this country or that Nevada has the 3rd highest rate of opioid overdose deaths in the Country can be examined and addressed.

Justice Douglas raised the issue that domestic abuse is a problem but the Bar does not require CLE's on domestic abuse. His query: Why is mental health/substance abuse different? In the not too distant past and even now in some cultures and countries abuse of wives and children was common. Women were to be "tamed" by their husbands. But through public awareness the problem has come to light. Through public awareness laws have been written. Domestic abuse is a crime. Every lawyer knows it is a crime. A CLE is not necessary on the crime of domestic abuse.

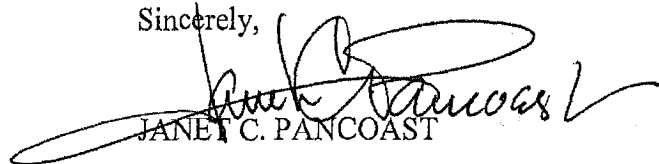
But how many lawyers know the signs of stress? How many lawyers know how to deal with stress? How many lawyers know the effects of long term stress? How many lawyers know what lifestyle changes they can make to help deal with stress, depression or anxiety? How many lawyers know about neuroplasticity? How many lawyers know about what happens when you mix benzodiazepines and narcotics or know of the amplification effect when some prescription drugs are combined? How many lawyers know the signs of depression or anxiety? Do they know how to deal with depression or anxiety? What are the signs of addiction? What do you do if a colleague or a loved one has an addiction? Until the answers to questions like these are common knowledge, we may need classes to learn about these issues. Ironically, the people who need to learn about these issues the most may be the most reluctant to attend such a course. The mandatory nature of the CLE will catch those who need it the most. For the rest, no doubt, they will know someone, a friend of a friend, a child or a spouse that the information in these CLEs would be helpful as well.

I would ask each of you to seriously consider approving this ADKT. It would seem that a CLE that may save lives, both literally and figuratively should be approved. Not ethics CLE or law-related CLE will save lives, but I have no doubt a one hour CLE on mental health and addiction may be instrumental in saving a career, a family, and yes, even a life. If I knew 20 years ago what I know now, maybe I could have pulled David back from the abyss, which in turn could have saved Max. The information proposed in these CLE's could have really helped me before the lives lost were past saving.

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As one who has dealt with these issues up close and personal, I would ask you to please approve the proposed CLE so that a better understanding of mental health issues and addiction can be fostered. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



JANET C. PANCOAST

Cc: Frank Flaherty, SBN President
Kimberly Farmer, Executive Director