

Office of the Dean

July 28, 2026

Acting Chief Justice Johnson and Justices
Washington State Supreme Court
415 12th Ave SW W
Olympia, WA 98504

RE: Catastrophic Failures in the Administration of the Next Generation Bar Exam in Washington Today
and Request for the Remedy of Diploma Privilege

Dear Acting Chief Justice Johnson:

I write today as Dean of the University of Washington School of Law accredited by the ABA and AALS because of the emergency situation occurring today in the administration of the Next Generation Bar Exam in Washington.

It has been reported by examinees and confirmed by the NCBE that the exam in Washington was not administered as promised today. The examinees showed up on time and were prepared to take the exam. However, the exam was not administered. The administrators of the exam in Washington were unable to get test takers connected to the exam. For multiple hours (approximately 5 hours) these technology issues persisted completely preventing the test takers from taking the exam. At approximately 1:00 p.m., examinees were sent home. As you can imagine, the bar takers were extremely exhausted, stressed, and anxious.

The circumstances created today were detrimental to test takers' ability to succeed on the exam. The environment today was disastrous. These exam administration failures today were not minor, in fact they were unprecedented and catastrophic, and therein cause grave concerns to fairness and equity. Unfortunately, this lived experience of our graduates reads like a negligent infliction of emotional distress hypo.

We are seeking immediate remedy on behalf of our Washington graduates, and all graduates, that experienced these failures in the administration of the Washington July 2026 Bar Exam. Our requested remedy is diploma privilege to neutralize the harms already experienced and to avoid any additional harms to these graduates, specifically to prevent any delay in their careers or admission to the practice. This solution is the only equitable remedy that would ensure that the financial, professional, and emotional burdens of this catastrophic failure is not shifted to the test takers.

Sincerely,



Tamara F. Lawson
Toni Rembe Dean and Professor of Law
University of Washington School of Law