



Virginia State Bar

To: The Virginia State Bar (VSB) Budget and Finance Committee

From: Janet P. Van Cuyk
Acting Executive Director

Date: June 3, 2026

Re: Proposed VSB Dues Increase Overview

I. BACKGROUND OF REQUEST FOR DUES INCREASE

The Virginia State Bar (VSB) is a self-sustaining, non-general fund agency responsible for raising its own revenue, most significantly through its annual membership dues. All dues payments are deposited into the State Bar Fund established pursuant to Va. Code § [54.1-3913](#), with amounts received exceeding payments held in reserve (Reserve Fund).

Statutory and Rule Caps:

Beginning in 1995, VSB annual dues were statutorily capped at \$250.¹ On July 1, 2026, the statutory cap will increase to \$350.² VSB annual dues for Active and Associate Members, \$250 and \$125, respectively, have not increased since July 1, 2000.³

Part Six, Section IV, Paragraph 11 of the Rules of the Supreme Court of Virginia (Paragraph 11) states the VSB annual dues may not exceed \$250 for Active Members and \$125 for Associate Members. Additionally, Paragraph 11 prohibits a dues increase if the VSB's Administrative and Finance Account and Reserve Fund balances are above 15 percent of the VSB's prior year's operating expenses. See **Appendix I** for the full text of Paragraph 11.

Revenue and Expenditures:

The VSB receives most of its revenue through annual membership dues payments. The VSB also generates revenue through other sources, such as mandatory continuing legal education (MCLE) course-

¹ 1995 Acts of Assembly, Chapter 15 ([HB 1812](#), Croshaw).

² 2026 Acts of Assembly, Chapter 584 ([HB 276](#), Kilgore).

³ From 2012 to 2015, VSB dues were reduced by \$25 and \$12.50 for Active and Associate Members, respectively.

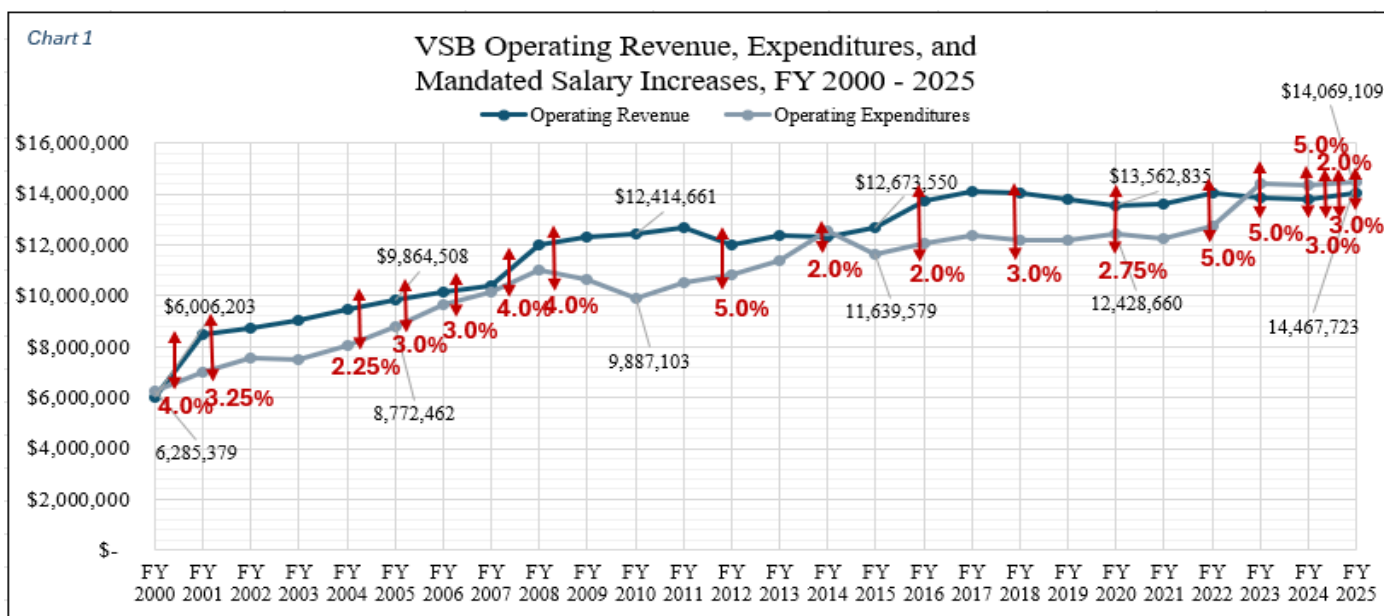
sponsor fees, delinquency fees, section-dues allotments, and Virginia Lawyer Referral Service administrative fees and remittances.

The growth in VSB expenditures is primarily due to increases in salaries, technology costs, inflation, and rent. Specifically:

- Since 2000, salaries have increased 59.5 percent.
- Technology demands and cybersecurity costs have risen substantially.
- Since 2000, inflation has risen 87 percent.
- In the past 10 years, rent has increased 28 percent.

Salaries are the VSB’s most significant operating expense. More than 70 percent of the VSB Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 Budget was allocated to employee salaries and benefits – an increase from 65 percent in FY 2000 and 58 percent in FY 2006. Despite the increase in the proportion of operating expenses attributable to employee salaries and benefits, the VSB has not had a corresponding increase in personnel – the FY 2026 budget included 91 funded positions, 2 fewer positions than funded in FY 2006.⁴

The data show that General Assembly-authorized salary increases, with the VSB’s primary revenue source capped, are highly correlated with the VSB’s increased expenditures, particularly beginning in FY 2021 where, between FY 2021 and 2025 there were the General Assembly mandated 6 separate raises adding more than a 20 percent increase in wages.⁵ **Chart 1** summarizes the mandated compensation increases, which were well-deserved and earned, alongside each FY’s total operating expenditures and revenue. See **Appendix II** for the FY 2000 through FY 2025 operating revenue and expenditures data.

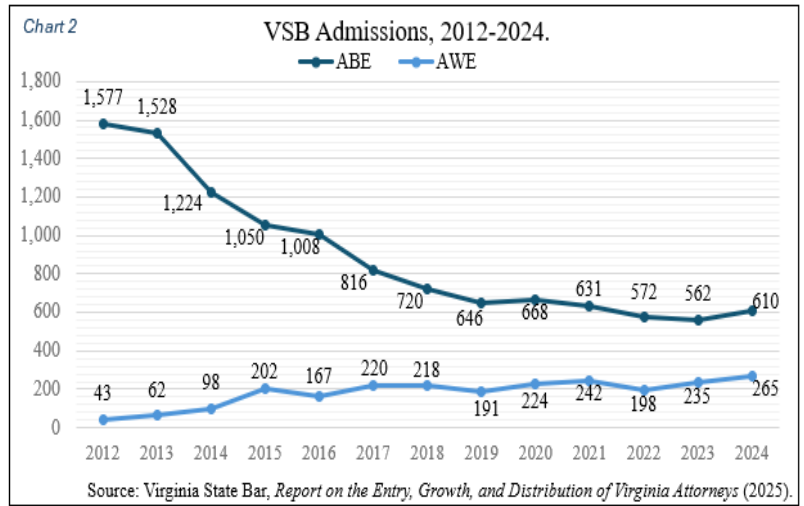


⁴ The VSB Budget documents presented to and approved by the Supreme Court of Virginia prior to 2006 listed the costs for salaries and benefits but did not list the number of funded positions.

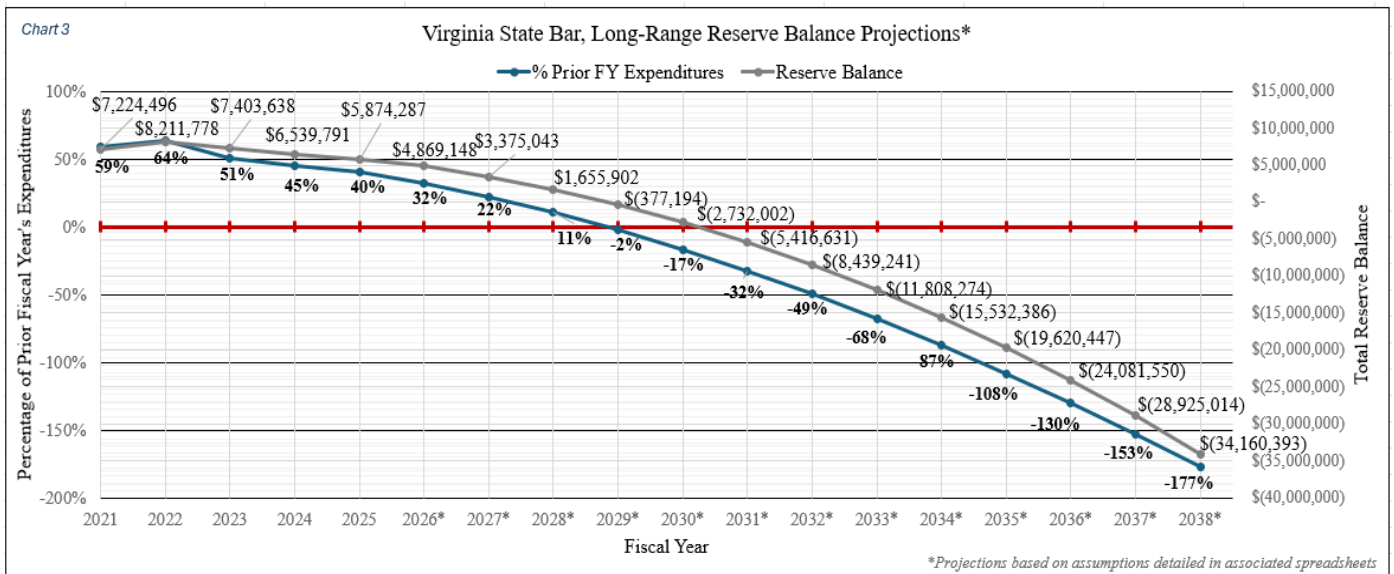
⁵ The General Assembly mandated (i) a 5.0 percent raise in June 2021, (ii) a 5.0 percent raise in July 2022, (iii) a 5.0 percent raise in June 2023, (iv) a 2.0 percent raise in December 2023, (v) a 3.0 percent raise in June 2024, and (vi) a 3.0 percent raise in June 2025. As the raises were implemented incrementally over time, each successive increase compounded on the employee’s previously adjusted salary, resulting in a cumulative effect greater than the sum of the individual percentage increases.

Budget Shortfalls:

Historically, the number of VSB members generally increased each year, resulting in higher amounts of revenue from annual dues payments – negating the need for a dues increase. However, VSB data show that, between 2012 and 2024, all new VSB admissions declined 48 percent. New VSB members admitted by examination (ABE) declined 56 percent. While VSB admissions without examination (AWE) increased 540 percent, the increase in the number of attorneys AWE is insufficient to replace the decline in ABE. See **Chart 2** for the supporting VSB admission data.



Given the stagnation in VSB membership numbers, VSB revenue has not kept pace with its operating expenses, resulting in an unbalanced budget. Beginning in FY 2006, the VSB budget was approved with anticipated expenditures exceeding anticipated revenue. Since that time, in several FYs, the VSB relied on Reserve Funds to cover the resulting budget shortfalls. See **Chart 1** for FY 2000 through 2025 operating revenue and expenditures and **Chart 3** for the reserve balances for FY 2021 through 2025 and the reserve balance projections for FY 2026 through 2038.



Maximizing Revenue and Containing Expenses:

The VSB's 2025-2028 Strategic Plan, adopted by Council in April 2024, has the strategic goal for the VSB to operate from a position of financial health by (i) maximizing revenue generation including, but not limited to, increasing bar dues, pursuing alternative revenue streams, and improving future flexibility of VSB fund balances; (ii) containing expenses; and (iii) educating members on the need for and benefits of VSB financial stability.

To achieve this goal, the following revenue maximization and expense containment measures were implemented:

- Increased MCLE sponsor fees.
- Restored delinquency fees to pre-pandemic levels.
- Reduced reliance on print publications and continued review of printing and mailing costs with a focus on leveraging technology for greatest accessibility of resources.
- Transitioned the four former conferences (Young Lawyers, Senior Lawyers, Diversity, and Local and Specialty Bar Associations) into self-funded sections.
- Did not replace the Information and Records Manager.
- For certain events, began charging fees when attendance was confirmed and the participant did not cancel registration and did not attend.

Additionally, in support of the 2025-2028 VSB Strategic Plan goal for VSB's financial health, the following steps were taken to educate members on the anticipated annual dues increase:

- Updates provided at all Executive Committee and Council meetings.
- Officers and the Executive Director directly addressed members at CLEs and other events.
- *Virginia Lawyer*, President K. Brett Marston's Message, "Making a Difference in Financial and Ethical Accountability" p. 8, October 2025. [LINK](#)
- *Virginia Lawyer*, President K. Brett Marston's Message, "Virginia Lawyers Making a Difference: CAN DO!," p. 16, August 2025. [LINK](#).
- *Virginia Lawyer*, Executive Director Cameron M. Rountree's Message, "Not Ossified in Millennium Amber: The Evolving Costs and Benefits of Your VSB," p. 10, April 2025. [LINK](#).
- *Virginia Lawyer*, "The VSB: What we do – 25 for 2025," p. 19, April 2025. [LINK](#).
- *Virginia Lawyer*, Executive Director Cameron M. Rountree's Message, "You: The Gift that Keeps on Giving," p. 14, December 2024. [LINK](#).
- *Virginia Lawyer*, Executive Director Cameron M. Rountree's Message, Part II, "It was my understanding that there would be no math.," p. 10, April 2024. [LINK](#).
- *Virginia Lawyer*, Executive Director Cameron M. Rountree's Message, Part I, "It was my understanding that there would be no math.," p. 12, February 2024. [LINK](#).

II. BUDGET AND FINANCE RECOMMENDATIONS

At its June 3, 2026, meeting, the Budget and Finance Committee (B&F Committee) are anticipated to decide the following action items:

Reserve Fund Balance Threshold:

1. Should Paragraph 11 be amended to increase the maximum Reserve Fund balance allowed before the Supreme Court of Virginia may authorize a membership dues increase (the current maximum amount allowable in the Reserve Fund is 15 percent of the VSB's prior year's operating expenses)?
2. If the B&F Committee recommends changing the Reserve Fund target amount, how should Paragraph 11 be amended (e.g., removing or increasing the target amount)?
3. If the B&F Committee recommends changing the Reserve Fund target amount, should public comment be solicited before presenting the recommendation to the Executive Committee and Council (see Section IV)?

Associate Member Dues Proportionality (see Section V):

1. Should the dues assessment for Associate Members continue at 50 percent of the assessment for Active Members?
2. If the Associate Member dues assessment should be a different percentage, what should that percentage be?

Dues Increase Levels (see Section VI):

1. To what level(s) should the Active Member dues increase?
2. To what level(s) should the Associate Member dues increase?
3. In what year(s) should member dues be requested for increase?

III. OVERVIEW OF PROCESS FOR REQUESTING A DUES INCREASE

The VSB financial projections continue to show that the VSB will be insolvent in 2030 without a dues increase and there are numerous steps that must be followed and approved before the annual membership dues may be increased.

The first step of the process for increasing the annual dues was successful - [HB 276](#) (Kilgore), effective July 1, 2026, amends § [54.1-3912](#) of the Code of Virginia to increase the statutory cap for VSB dues from \$250 to \$350. HB 276, as introduced, would have removed the statutory dues cap, was reported unanimously from the House Courts of Justice Committee, and passed the House unanimously. The Senate Courts of Justice Committee rejected the removal of the statutory cap and voted unanimously to raise the cap to \$350.⁶ During the debate in this Committee, it was affirmatively stated several times that the VSB was taking the position that a dues increase of \$50 would be sufficient to balance the VSB's budget at that time. Several comments made during this discussion may be informative in the B&F Committee's deliberative process. **Appendix III** contains a summary of the Senate Courts of Justice Committee's debate on HB 276, in relevant part.

We anticipate the next steps in this process will be:

- **June 2026:**
The Budget and Finance Committee meets to review the budget and projections and to recommend an amount for the dues increase.
- **June – August 2026:**
Public comment will be solicited for amending Paragraph 11 relating to annual membership dues as follows:
 - i. *Paragraph 11, first paragraph:* Increase the annual dues assessments to the amounts recommended by the B&F Committee.
 - ii. *Paragraph 11, second paragraph:* Remove or increase the maximum percentage of reserve fund balances required for requesting a dues increase.
- **October 2026:**
Request the Executive Committee to recommend to Council and Council to recommend to the Supreme Court of Virginia amendments to Paragraph 11 to (i) increase annual membership dues and (ii) remove or increase the reserve fund balance required to be reached before making such requests.
- **October 2026:**
Petition the Supreme Court of Virginia to approve the amendments to Paragraph 11 to (i) increase the annual membership dues and (ii) remove or increase the reserve fund balance required to be reached before making such requests.

Should the Supreme Court of Virginia approve the requested Rule changes, immediately thereafter, the VSB will notify members through all available communication methods. The membership dues would increase for annual dues to be paid on or before July 31, 2027, for FY 2028.

⁶ The Senate Courts of Justice Committee's February 18, 2026, debate may be viewed through this [LINK](#). Discussion of HB 276 beginning at the 41st minute of the video (or 2:46 p.m. of the meeting).

IV. RESERVE FUND BALANCE THRESHOLD, PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

On July 1, 2024, the VSB sought comments on amending Paragraph 11 to raise the required minimum balance threshold for the Supreme Court of Virginia’s authorization of a dues increase. Specifically, comments were sought for the proposed amendment to increase the minimum balance threshold to 15 percent to 30 percent to ensure sufficient time to obtain approval from the Supreme Court and the Virginia General Assembly when a dues increase is required before funds are exhausted. The VSB News Item is provided in **Appendix IV**.

The comment period was open for over 30 days and closed on September 2, 2024. One comment was received during this period which opposed increasing dues based on a 30 percent threshold. The full public comment is provided in **Appendix V**.

V. ASSOCIATE MEMBER DUES PROPORTIONALITY TO ACTIVE MEMBERS

In addition to setting the maximum annual dues amount, Paragraph 11 mandates that the dues assessment for new VSB members admitted after taking the Virginia Bar Exam be “one-half the amount of dues” for their member class, which currently is \$125 for Active Members and \$62.50 for Associate Members. Historically, the VSB annual dues assessment for Associate Members has been assessed at 50 percent of the Active Member dues. However, the proportions for these assessments may be changed by the Supreme Court of Virginia.

For discussion on whether the Active and Associate Member dues’ levels should be at a different proportion, **Table 1** provides a snapshot of the rates for dues and fees assessments for Active and Inactive (Associate Members in Virginia) in the 32 mandatory state bar associations.

Table 1

Membership (12/31/2024)			State	Size Category*	Active		Associate	Difference Active to Associate License Fees	Difference Active Regulatory^ to Associate License Fees	Percent Associate Fee is of Active License Fee	Percent Associate Fee is of Active Regulatory^ Fee TOTAL
Active	Inactive~	TOTAL			License Fees**	Regulatory Fees^ TOTAL	License Fees				
14477	4,873	19350	AL: Alabama State Bar	Medium	\$ 300	\$ 300	\$ 150	\$ 150	\$ 85	50%	50%
4044	820	4864	AK: Alaska Bar Association	Small	\$ 650	\$ 650	\$ 215	\$ 435	\$ 385	33%	33%
22747	3606	26353	AZ: State Bar of Arizona	Med-Large	\$ 485	\$ 485	\$ 265	\$ 220	\$ 280	55%	55%
213689	76573	290262	CA: State Bar of California	Large	\$ 476	\$ 501	\$ 205	\$ 271	\$ 279	43%	41%
100326	18900	119226	DC: District of Columbia Bar	Large	\$ 341	\$ 341	\$ 222	\$ 119	\$ 166	65%	65%
103561	10648	114209	FL: The Florida Bar	Large	\$ 265	\$ 265	\$ 175	\$ 90	\$ 118	66%	66%
47510	7882	55392	GA: State Bar of Georgia	Large	\$ 264	\$ 264	\$ 147	\$ 117	\$ 174	56%	56%
4946	3381	8327	HI: Hawaii State Bar Association	Small	\$ 210	\$ 560	\$ 90	\$ 120	\$ 390	43%	16%
6560	714	7274	ID: Idaho State Bar	Small	\$ 485	\$ 485	\$ 170	\$ 315	\$ 335	35%	35%
19315	1001	20316	KY: Kentucky Bar Assoc.	Med-Large	\$ 218	\$ 266	\$ 150	\$ 68	\$ 266	69%	56%
23200	7022	30222	LA: Louisiana State Bar Assoc.	Med-Large	\$ 200	\$ 435	\$ -	\$ 200	\$ 288	0%	0%
45979	1310	47289	MI: State Bar of Michigan	Med-Large	\$ 260	\$ 400	\$ 147	\$ 113	\$ 350	57%	37%
8824	2312	11136	MO: The Missouri Bar	Med-Large	\$ 380	\$ 380	\$ 50	\$ 330	\$ 280	13%	13%
31563	5373	36936	MO: The Missouri Bar	Med-Large	\$ 259	\$ 360	\$ 100	\$ 159	\$ 145	39%	28%
4272	1028	5300	MT: State Bar of Montana*	Small	\$ 495	\$ 515	\$ 215	\$ 280	\$ 390	43%	42%
10874	2938	13812	NV: State Bar of Nevada	Medium	\$ 450	\$ 450	\$ 125	\$ 325	\$ 275	28%	28%
5802	3026	8828	NH: New Hampshire Bar Assoc.	Small	\$ 310	\$ 555	\$ 175	\$ 135	\$ 455	56%	32%
8428	3070	11498	NM: State Bar of New Mexico	Medium	\$ 275	\$ 425	\$ 100	\$ 175	\$ 425	36%	24%
34406	10304	44710	NC: North Carolina State Bar	Med-Large	\$ 300	\$ 325	\$ -	\$ 300	\$ 325	0%	0%
2975	0	2975	ND: State Bar Assoc. of N. Dakota*	Small	\$ 380	\$ 380	\$ -	\$ 380	\$ 380	0%	0%
16375	2665	19040	OK: Oklahoma Bar Association	Medium	\$ 350	\$ 350	\$ -	\$ 350	\$ 200	0%	0%
15664	5093	20757	OR: Oregon State Bar	Med-Large	\$ 658	\$ 658	\$ 150	\$ 508	\$ 468	23%	23%
5626	1207	6833	RI: Rhode Island Bar Assoc.**	Small	\$ 425	\$ 425	\$ 190	\$ 235	\$ 195	45%	45%
16810	2381	19191	SC: South Carolina Bar	Medium	\$ 300	\$ 370	\$ 230	\$ 70	\$ 170	77%	62%
2829	636	3465	SD: State Bar of South Dakota	Small	\$ 540	\$ 540	\$ 200	\$ 340	\$ 485	37%	37%
116147	20138	136285	TX: State Bar of Texas	Large	\$ 258	\$ 258	\$ 55	\$ 203	\$ 108	21%	21%
11093	3512	14605	UT: Utah State Bar	Medium	\$ 425	\$ 435	\$ 150	\$ 275	\$ 310	35%	34%
32500	21929	54429	VA: Virginia State Bar	Large	\$ 250	\$ 250	\$ 125	\$ 125	\$ 50	50%	50%
36518	6130	42648	WA: Washington State Bar Assoc.	Med-Large	\$ 458	\$ 458	\$ 200	\$ 258	\$ 358	44%	44%
6872	2903	9775	WV: West Virginia State Bar	Small	\$ 250	\$ 250	\$ 100	\$ 150	\$ 96	40%	40%
21214	4533	25747	WI: State Bar of Wisconsin	Med-Large	\$ 296	\$ 462	\$ 155	\$ 142	\$ 225	52%	33%
3408	403	3811	WY: Wyoming State Bar	Small	\$ 350	\$ 355	\$ 238	\$ 113	\$ 118	68%	67%
					\$ 361	\$ 411	\$ 140	\$ 221	\$ 268	40%	35%
					Removing \$0 Associate Fee:		\$ 160	\$ 253	\$ 306	46%	40%

~ Inactive Members are defined by the reporting bar association. In Virginia, Associate Members are classified as Inactive Members. The 2025 American Bar Association Benchmark Report had "0" for the Alabama State Bar. This was supplemented with data from the Alabama State Bar's website (www.alabar.org) in May 2026.

*Bar Association Size Categories are broken down as follows:

Small=<10,000 members											
Medium=10,000-19,999 members											
Med-Large=20,000-49,999 members											
Large=50,000+ members											

**License Fees are the annual assessment identifies by the bar associations in the 2025 American Bar Association's Benchmark Report.

^ Regulatory Fees are annual assessments for (i) license fees; (ii) dues assessments; (iii) disciplinary system fees; and (iv) MCLE fees.

VI. DUES INCREASE LEVELS AND TIMING

Fees for All Mandatory State Bar Associations

To assist in the analysis to determine the appropriate VSB annual dues assessment levels, **Appendix VI** provides details of the annual dues and fee assessments in the 32 mandatory state bar associations.⁷ **Tables 2, 3, and 4** rank the dues and fees assessed on the members by each mandatory state bar association.

Table 2

Mandatory State Bar License Fee* Rankings	
State	License Fees*
Louisiana	\$200
Hawaii	\$210
Kentucky	\$218
Virginia	\$250
West Virginia	\$250
Texas	\$258
Missouri	\$259
Michigan	\$260
Georgia	\$264
Florida	\$265
New Mexico	\$275
Wisconsin	\$296
Alabama	\$300
North Carolina	\$300
South Carolina	\$300
New Hampshire	\$310
Montana	\$325
District of Columbia	\$341
Oklahoma	\$350
Wyoming	\$350
Mississippi	\$380
North Dakota	\$380
Rhode Island	\$425
Utah	\$425
Nevada	\$450
Washington	\$458
California	\$476
Arizona	\$485
Idaho	\$485
South Dakota	\$540
Alaska	\$650
Oregon	\$658
Average	\$356

*License Fees are the annual assessment identified by the bar associations in the 2025 ABA's Benchmark Report.

Table 3

Mandatory State Bar Regulatory Fee* Rankings	
State	Regulatory Fees*
Virginia	\$250
West Virginia	\$250
Texas	\$258
Georgia	\$264
Florida	\$265
Kentucky	\$266
Alabama	\$300
North Carolina	\$325
District of Columbia	\$341
Oklahoma	\$350
Wyoming	\$355
Missouri	\$360
South Carolina	\$370
Mississippi	\$380
North Dakota	\$380
Michigan	\$400
New Mexico	\$425
Rhode Island	\$425
Louisiana	\$435
Utah	\$435
Nevada	\$450
Washington	\$458
Wisconsin	\$462
Arizona	\$485
Idaho	\$485
Montana	\$495
California	\$501
South Dakota	\$540
New Hampshire	\$555
Hawaii	\$560
Alaska	\$650
Oregon	\$658
Average	\$410

*Regulatory Fees are annual assessments for (i) license fees; (ii) dues assessments; (iii) disciplinary system fees; and (iv) MCLE fees.

Table 4

Mandatory State Bar Cost to Practice* Rankings	
State	Cost to Practice*
West Virginia	\$250
Florida	\$265
Virginia	\$285
Georgia	\$290
Kentucky	\$310
Texas	\$323
Alabama	\$325
North Carolina	\$325
District of Columbia	\$341
Oklahoma	\$350
Wyoming	\$355
Mississippi	\$380
North Dakota	\$380
South Carolina	\$400
Missouri	\$410
Michigan	\$415
Louisiana	\$435
Utah	\$435
New Mexico	\$440
Idaho	\$445
Nevada	\$450
Rhode Island	\$450
Washington	\$478
Arizona	\$505
Montana	\$515
Wisconsin	\$537
South Dakota	\$540
California	\$551
New Hampshire	\$615
Alaska	\$660
Hawaii	\$679
Oregon	\$683
Average	\$432

*Cost to Practice is the total Regulatory Fees plus any other assessments lawyers are required to pay annually.

⁷ Appendix IV and the tables in this section were created using the American Bar Association's 2025 Benchmark Report and supplemented with information from bar association websites as needed to understand, supplement, or clarify the data.

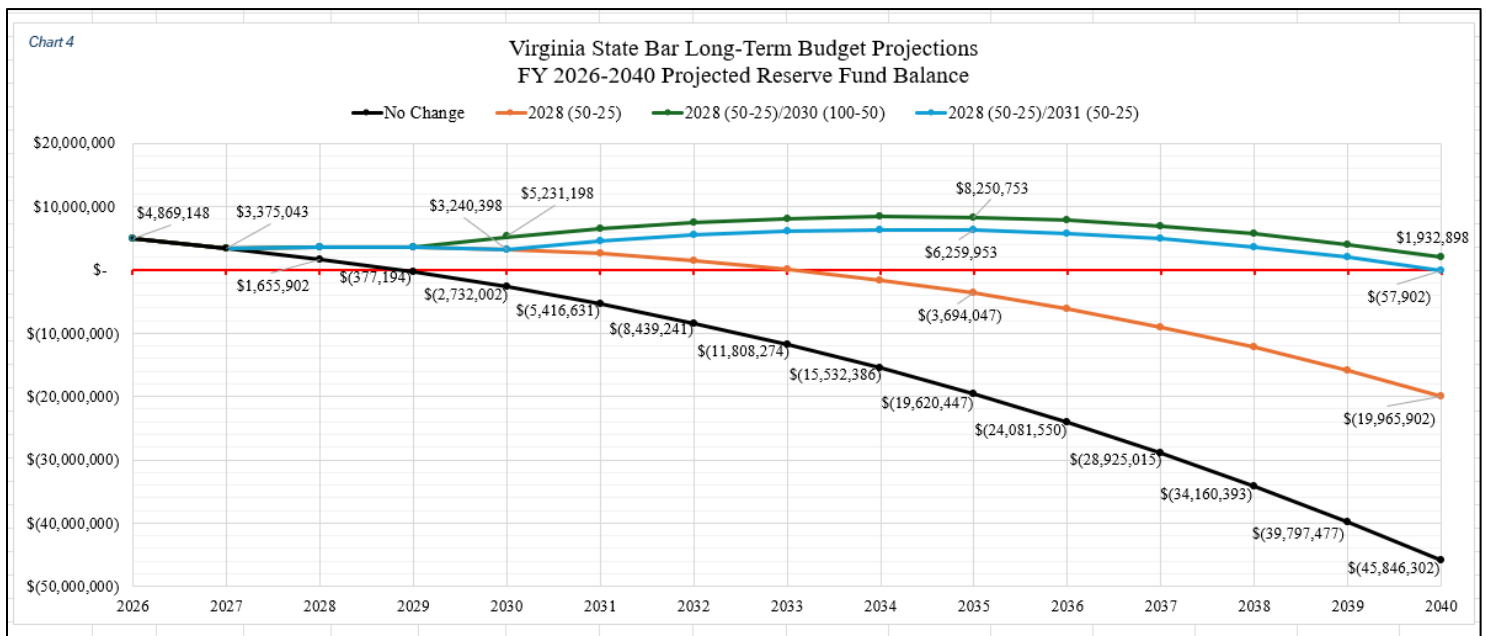
Dues Increase Scenarios

The materials for the B&F Committee meeting contain several possible scenarios for increasing VSB annual membership dues to balance the budget and plan for long-term financial health, subject to the \$350 statutory cap in Va. Code § [54.1-3913](#), as amended on July 1, 2026.

Chart 4 shows the current long-term projections and those for three dues increase scenarios, with the implementation FY before the parentheses and the amount of the dues increase from \$250 for Active and \$125 for Associate Members in the parentheses. The supporting data are provided in **Appendix VII**.

The dues increase scenarios are:

- **No Change-(0-0):**
 - Static Projections without any dues increases.
- **2028-(50-25):**
 - In 2028, increase Active Member dues to \$300 and Associate Member dues to \$150.
 - No additional increase.
- **2028-(50-25)/2030-(100-50):**
 - In 2028, increase Active Member dues to \$300 and Associate Member dues to \$150.
 - In 2030, increase Active Member dues to \$350 and Associate Member dues to \$175.
- **2028-(50-25)/2031-(50-25):**
 - In 2028, increase Active Member dues to \$300 and Associate Member dues to \$150.
 - In 2031, increase Active Member dues to \$350 and Associate Member dues to \$175.



PART SIX, SECTION IV, PARAGRAPH 11 OF THE RULES OF THE SUPREME COURT OF VIRGINIA

11. Dues

Each active member shall pay to the Treasurer of the Virginia State Bar, annual dues not to exceed \$250, and each associate member shall pay to the Treasurer of the Virginia State Bar annual dues not to exceed \$125, on or before the 31st day of July of each fiscal year, provided that persons admitted to practice by examination or under Rule 1A:1 of the Supreme Court of Virginia shall not be liable for dues in the year of admission if admitted during the last three months of any fiscal year. Persons admitted to practice under Rule 1A:1 at any other point during any fiscal year shall pay the full amount of dues as specified above at the time they register with the Virginia State Bar. Persons admitted to practice by examination at any other point during any fiscal year shall pay one-half the amount of dues as specified above at the time they register with the Virginia State Bar. On or before April 1st, the Bar shall report to the Court the annual dues amount proposed for the next fiscal year.

No increase in the annual dues above \$250 for active members or \$125 for associate members will be authorized by the Court whenever the total combined cash balances of the State Bar Fund and the Virginia State Bar's Administration and Finance Account shall exceed fifteen (15) percent of the total annual operating expenditures of the Virginia State Bar for the year preceding the year in which the dues increase is sought.

All monies collected hereunder shall be accounted for and paid into the State Treasury of Virginia.

Failure to comply with this Rule shall subject the member to penalties set forth in Paragraph 19 herein.

APPENDIX II

FISCAL YEAR 2000-2026 OPERATING REVENUE AND EXPENDITURES

Operating Revenue and Operating Expenditures FY 2000 through FY 2025						
Fiscal Year	Operating Revenue	Operating Expenditures	Other Disbursements	CPF Transfers	Total Expenditures	Reserve Fund on June 30
FY 2000	\$ 6,006,203	6,285,379	275,798.00	-	6,561,177.00	347,087.00
FY 2001	\$ 8,468,167	7,026,032	183,672.00	-	7,209,704.00	1,605,550.00
FY 2002	\$ 8,741,481	7,524,990	557,232.00	-	8,082,222.00	2,264,809.00
FY 2003	\$ 9,052,612	7,472,834	911,126.00	-	8,383,960.00	2,933,461.00
FY 2004	\$ 9,467,515	8,037,948	993,658.00	(500,000.00)	8,531,606.00	3,369,370.00
FY 2005	\$ 9,864,508	8,772,462	959,103.00	(250,000.00)	9,481,565.00	3,502,313.00
FY 2006	\$ 10,149,715	9,648,863	777,361.00	-	10,426,224.00	3,225,805.00
FY 2007	\$ 10,409,087	10,148,711	690,876.00	-	10,839,587.00	2,795,304.00
FY 2008	\$ 11,976,470	10,986,701	1,200,516.00	(672,375.00)	11,514,842.00	2,584,557.00
FY 2009	\$ 12,323,709	10,630,992	917,059.00	(691,923.00)	10,856,128.00	3,360,215.00
FY 2010	\$ 12,414,661	9,887,103	1,169,012.00	(731,262.00)	10,324,853.00	4,718,762.00
FY 2011	\$ 12,676,836	10,512,860	1,123,327.46	(738,366.56)	10,897,820.60	5,759,410.82
FY 2012	\$ 12,010,171	10,805,431	1,319,139.51	(797,873.45)	11,326,697.30	5,645,011.30
FY 2013	\$ 12,343,560	11,364,515	1,417,736.07	(770,513.70)	12,011,737.19	5,196,320.48
FY 2014	\$ 12,297,167	12,567,611	1,588,577.12	(782,497.62)	13,373,690.32	3,337,299.98
FY 2015	\$ 12,673,550	11,639,579	1,189,060.31	(837,564.78)	11,991,074.46	3,182,210.52
FY 2016	\$ 13,748,694	12,052,594	1,386,593.61	(820,645.76)	12,618,541.60	3,494,217.02
FY 2017	\$ 14,112,429	12,398,086	1,330,092.83	(839,865.51)	12,888,313.78	3,878,466.47
FY 2018	\$ 14,024,102	12,162,275	1,240,182.49	(823,417.13)	12,579,040.04	4,500,111.66
FY 2019	\$ 13,781,408	12,163,295	776,013.98	(345,319.49)	12,593,989.81	5,342,209.94
FY 2020	\$ 13,562,835	12,428,660	421,231.33	(335,317.46)	12,514,574.30	6,055,153.61
FY 2021	\$ 13,578,700	12,234,054	389,478.35	(357,853.35)	12,265,678.59	7,010,321.68
FY 2022	\$ 14,030,351	12,772,092	326,121.42	(252,026.42)	12,846,186.60	7,942,460.04
FY 2023	\$ 13,871,689	14,417,105	261,460.51	(165,905.51)	14,512,659.95	7,135,583.52
FY 2024	\$ 13,788,580	14,372,014	264,922.29	(180,380.35)	14,456,555.44	6,287,227.89
FY 2025	\$ 14,069,109	14,467,723	264,466.37	(173,971.37)	14,558,217.54	5,624,147.57

Source: Cash with the Treasurer Reports

SENATE COURTS OF JUSTICE COMMITTEE'S FEBRUARY 18, 2026 DISCUSSION OF HB 276 (KILGORE)

Below is a summary of the Senate Courts of Justice Committee's discussion on HB 276, in relevant part:

- When the Patron was called to the podium, the Chair said he “wants to make me pay higher bar dues.”
 - After introducing the bill, the Paton stated:
...We all know what the Virginia State Bar does. Costs have gone up. A lot of things have gone up. But, I know the President of the State Bar is here. And they would tell you, and I think they would tell you that they have no intentions of asking for more than like \$50, just to raise it up \$50. It's not like they are going to be doubling it or something. ...
 - To the Patron's comment, the Chair stated: “They have no present intentions, I'm sure.”
 - Senator Stuart asked, “How much do you need to raise the dues?” to which President Marston replied, “...in short...\$50 per member will balance us out right now...”
 - Senator Stuart stated, “...I'm happy to offer an amendment for an increase, but I'm not comfortable with voting to remove the cap. ...I'm happy to vote to increase it reasonably, but the cap concerns me.”
 - Senator Stuart asked, “What's the number that you need? And, I'm happy to offer that amendment. I can vote for it.”
 - President Marston responded, “Well, what we are proposing to raise them to, to balance out the budget each year right now is \$300 from \$250.”
 - Senator Stuart made a motion to amend the bill to increase the cap to \$300.
 - President Marston asked for a cap higher than \$300 to allow “flexibility to bring forward increases that might be due, especially in a high inflationary period...”
 - Senator Sturtevant noted:
\$50 may be what they need to increase it by now, right now But, you know, if they haven't come back in 25 years, perhaps if it's the will of the Committee to raise the cap, maybe we need to do it more than just what they are asking for today to keep their revenue on parity with where they are now. I don't know what that dollar figure might be, but.
 - Senator Obenshain, after stating his “great confidence” in President Marston and the administration of the Bar stated:
...we don't know what's going to happen five years from now, ten years from now. And, you know, just an open-ended removal of the cap, I think, invites not abuse; but it invites kind of growth that, you know, we have concerns about...
- Thereafter, he commented on the 1995 legislation that reduced the statutory cap from \$300 to \$250 and stated:
...so, there was something going on and it was, maybe not abuse, but there was concern about trying to make sure that we keep some reasonable control. And

I think, you know, a \$50 increase is fine. You know, some additional flexibility I could maybe live with. ...

- Senator Boysko spoke in favor of removing the cap and, if there was a problem with fiscal responsibility, guardrails could be put on any year during session since the General Assembly meets annually.
- The Patron indicated, if there were a problem or abuse, he would bring a bill to address it.
- Senator Peake made a substitute motion to amend the bill to raise the statutory cap to \$350.
- The Committee briefly discussed affordability, fees, and the requirement for lawyers who represent indigent clients having to pay these dues. Senator Stuart stated. “...*no offense to the guys with the big firms in Virginia and those places, they’re not going to think about it. It’s not going to bother me, but it will bother some. So, I think we have to be prudent about this.*”
- Senator Obenshain noted there are “*additional revenue sources*” and referenced the 2019 addition of the \$30 wellness assessment that is mandatory but does not violate the statutory dues limit – so the cost to practice “*is going up.*”
- Several senators commented on legal deserts, struggling lawyers, legal deserts, and the decline of lawyers in rural communities.
- When the motion was called for the \$100 increase, Senator Obenshain commented to the Patron, “doesn’t mean, ‘Please raise our dues by \$100.’”
- The bill as amended passed unanimously.

The full Senate Courts of Justice Committee discussion of HB 276 may be viewed though this [LINK](#). Debate on the bill begins at the 41st minute of the video (or 2:46 p.m. of the meeting).

VSB NEWS ITEM REQUESTING PUBLIC COMMENT ON AMENDING PARAGRAPH 11



Virginia State Bar

An agency of the Supreme Court of Virginia

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This proposal is still pending.

July 1, 2024

VSB Seeks Comment on Raising the Required Minimum Balance Threshold for the Court's Authorization of a Dues Increase

The Virginia State Bar (VSB) seeks comment on amending Part 6, Section IV, Paragraph 11 of the Rules of the Supreme Court of Virginia to raise the required minimum balance threshold of the state bar fund and administration and finance account to allow the Supreme Court's authorization of an annual dues increase. The current level at which the Supreme Court may authorize an annual dues increase occurs when the combined balance falls below 15 percent of the total annual operating expenditures during the year prior to the year a dues increase is sought. The VSB seeks to increase the minimum balance threshold to 30 percent to ensure sufficient time to obtain approval from the Supreme Court and the Virginia General Assembly when a dues increase is required before funds are exhausted.

PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE RULES OF THE SUPREME COURT OF VIRGINIA (Proposed July 2024)

[Deletions noted by strikethroughs; additions by underlining; the portion of Rule 11 proposed for amendment is provided below]

Part 6 Section IV, Paragraph 11. Dues

... No increase in the annual dues above \$250 for active members or \$125 for associate members will be authorized by the Court whenever the total combined cash balances of the State Bar Fund and the Virginia State Bar's Administration and Finance Account shall exceed ~~fifteen~~thirty (~~15~~30) percent of the total annual operating expenditures of the Virginia State Bar for the year preceding the year in which the dues increase is sought. ...

Comment:

Any individual, business, or other entity may submit written comments in support of or in opposition to the proposed action to Cameron M. Rountree, executive director of the Virginia State Bar, by close of business on September 2, 2024. Comments may be submitted via email to publiccomment@vsb.org.

COMMENTS RECEIVED ON AMENDING PARAGRAPH 11 TO INCREASE THE REQUIRED MINIMUM BALANCE THRESHOLD FOR THE COURT'S AUTHORIZATION OF A DUES INCREASE FROM 15 TO 30 PERCENT

From: Colin Smith <cfsprofessional@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, August 2, 2024 12:50 PM
To: publiccomment <PublicComment@vsb.org>
Subject: EXTERNAL SENDER Threshold balance increase

You don't often get email from cfsprofessional@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Sir or Ma'am,

I do not support increases to dues based on a 30% minimum threshold. From my standpoint as a sole practitioner, my state bar dues, local bar dues coupled with overhead costs are already fairly high vis my gross income. I realize this is not a request for comment *per se* on what bar due amounts should be. However, I believe that the higher reserve could be much more easily triggered and bar dues would invariably increase. A large wealthy firm can afford to pay bar dues for its associates. Small firms and sole practitioners pay out of pocket without respect to size or revenue.

Respectfully submitted,

--

Colin Smith Esq
The Law Firm of Colin F Smith PLLC
9401 Battle Street
Suite 207
Manassas VA 20110
T: (571) 363 1479

APPENDIX VI

MANDATORY STATE BAR ASSOCIATIONS ANNUAL DUES AND FEE ASSESSMENTS

Membership			State		Active (generally)							Notes	
Active	Inactive ~	TOTAL		Size Category*	License Fees**	Disciplinary System Fees	MCLE Fees	Regulatory Fees^ TOTAL	CPF Assessment	LAP/Wellness Assessment	Other Fees/Assessments		Cost to Practice TOTAL
14477	4,873	19350	AL: Alabama State Bar	Medium	\$300			\$300	\$25			\$325	
4044	820	4864	AK: Alaska Bar Association	Small	\$650			\$650	\$10			\$660	
22747	3606	26353	AZ: State Bar of Arizona	Med-Large	\$485			\$485	\$20			\$505	
213689	76573	290262	CA: State Bar of California	Large	\$476	\$25		\$501	\$40			\$551	
100326	18900	119226	DC: District of Columbia Bar	Large	\$341			\$341				\$341	
103561	10648	114209	FL: The Florida Bar	Large	\$265			\$265				\$265	
47510	7882	55392	GA: State Bar of Georgia	Large	\$264			\$264	\$15		\$11	\$290	\$11: Prof. Comm.
4946	3381	8327	HI: Hawaii State Bar Association	Small	\$210	\$350		\$560	\$60	\$44	\$15	\$679	\$15: Proc.Fee
6560	714	7274	ID: Idaho State Bar	Small	\$485			\$485	\$20			\$445	
19315	1001	20316	KY: Kentucky Bar Assoc.	Med-Large	\$218		\$48	\$266	\$7	\$15	\$22	\$310	\$20: Building Fund; \$2: Legal Aid
23200	7022	30222	LA: Louisiana State Bar Assoc.	Med-Large	\$200	\$235		\$435				\$435	
45979	1310	47289	MI: State Bar of Michigan	Med-Large	\$260	\$140		\$400	\$15			\$415	
8824	2312	11136	MS: The Mississippi Bar	Med-Large	\$380			\$380				\$380	
31563	5373	36936	MO: The Missouri Bar	Med-Large	\$259	\$101		\$360			\$50	\$410	\$50: Legal Aid
4272	1028	5300	MT: State Bar of Montana	Small	\$325	\$125	\$45	\$495	\$20			\$515	License Fees = \$300: Annual Dues; \$25: Licensing
10874	2938	13812	NV: State Bar of Nevada	Medium	\$450			\$450				\$450	
5802	3026	8828	NH: New Hampshire Bar Assoc.	Small	\$310	\$245		\$555	\$30	\$30		\$615	
8428	3070	11498	NM: State Bar of New Mexico	Medium	\$275	\$150		\$425	\$15			\$440	
34406	10304	44710	NC: North Carolina State Bar	Med-Large	\$300		\$25	\$325				\$325	
2975	0	2975	ND: State Bar Assoc. of N. Dakota	Small	\$380			\$380				\$380	
16375	2665	19040	OK: Oklahoma Bar Association	Medium	\$350			\$350				\$350	
15664	5093	20757	OR: Oregon State Bar	Med-Large	\$658			\$658	\$15		\$10	\$683	\$10: Loan Repay Asst.
5626	1207	6833	RI: Rhode Island Bar Assoc.	Small	\$425			\$425	\$25			\$450	License Fees = \$225 Dues Assmt: \$200: Sup. Ct. Lic. Fee
16810	2381	19191	SC: South Carolina Bar	Medium	\$300	\$70		\$370	\$30			\$400	
2829	636	3465	SD: State Bar of South Dakota	Small	\$540			\$540				\$540	
116147	20138	136285	TX: State Bar of Texas	Large	\$258			\$258			\$65	\$323	\$65: Legal Aid
11093	3512	14605	UT: Utah State Bar	Medium	\$425		\$10	\$435				\$435	
32500	21929	54429	VA: Virginia State Bar	Large	\$250			\$250	\$5	\$30		\$285	
36518	6130	42648	WA: Washington State Bar Assoc.	Med-Large	\$458			\$458	\$20			\$478	
6872	2903	9775	WV: West Virginia State Bar	Small	\$250			\$250				\$250	
21214	4533	25747	WI: State Bar of Wisconsin	Med-Large	\$296	\$155	\$11	\$462	\$25		\$50	\$537	
3408	403	3811	WY: Wyoming State Bar	Small	\$350		\$5	\$355				\$355	
AVERAGE					\$356	\$160	\$29	\$410	\$22	\$30	\$32	\$432	
<p>~ Inactive Members are defined by the reporting bar association. In Virginia, Associate Members are classified as Inactive Members. The 2025 American Bar Association Benchmark Report had "0" for the Alabama State Bar. This was supplemented with data from the Alabama State Bar's website (www.alabar.org) in May 2026.</p> <p>*Bar Association Size Categories are broken down as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Small=<10,000 members Medium=10,000-19,999 members Med-Large=20,000-49,999 members Large=50,000+ members <p>**License Fees are the annual assessment identifies by the bar associations in the 2025 American Bar Association's Benchmark Report.</p> <p>^ Regulatory Fees are annual assessments for (i) license fees; (ii) dues assessments; (iii) disciplinary system fees; and (iv) MCLE fees.</p>													

APPENDIX VII

VIRGINIA STATE BAR DUES INCREASE SCENARIOS LONG-RANGE RESERVE FUND PROJECTIONS

Virginia State Bar Dues Increase Scenarios Long-Range Reserve Fund Projections																
Fiscal Year	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035	2036	2037	2038	2039	2040	
No Change	Reserve Balance	\$ 4,869,148	\$ 3,375,043	\$ 1,655,902	\$ (377,194)	\$(2,732,002)	\$(5,416,631)	\$(8,439,241)	\$(11,808,274)	\$(15,532,386)	\$(19,620,447)	\$(24,081,550)	\$(28,925,015)	\$(34,160,393)	\$(39,797,477)	\$(45,846,302)
	Reserve %	32.0%	21.7%	10.5%	-2.3%	-16.7%	-32.4%	-49.5%	-67.9%	-87.5%	-108.3%	-130.2%	-153.3%	-177.3%	-202.4%	-228.4%
2028(50-25)	Reserve Balance	\$ 4,869,148	\$ 3,375,043	\$ 3,646,702	\$ 3,604,406	\$ 3,240,398	\$ 2,546,569	\$ 1,514,759	\$ 136,526	\$ (1,596,786)	\$ (3,694,047)	\$ (6,164,350)	\$ (9,017,015)	\$(12,261,593)	\$(15,907,877)	\$(19,965,902)
	Reserve %	32.0%	21.7%	23.2%	22.4%	19.8%	15.2%	8.9%	0.8%	-9.0%	-20.4%	-33.3%	-47.8%	-63.7%	-80.9%	-99.4%
2028(50-25)/ 2030(100-50)	Reserve Balance	\$ 4,869,148	\$ 3,375,043	\$ 3,646,702	\$ 3,604,406	\$ 5,231,198	\$ 6,528,169	\$ 7,487,159	\$ 8,099,726	\$ 8,357,214	\$ 8,250,753	\$ 7,771,250	\$ 6,909,385	\$ 5,655,607	\$ 4,000,123	\$ 1,932,898
	Reserve %	32.0%	21.7%	23.2%	22.4%	31.9%	39.1%	43.9%	46.6%	47.1%	45.5%	42.0%	36.6%	29.4%	20.3%	9.6%
2028(50-25)/ 2031(50-25)	Reserve Balance	\$ 4,869,148	\$ 3,375,043	\$ 3,646,702	\$ 3,604,406	\$ 3,240,398	\$ 4,537,369	\$ 5,496,359	\$ 6,108,926	\$ 6,366,414	\$ 6,259,953	\$ 5,780,450	\$ 4,918,585	\$ 3,664,807	\$ 2,009,323	\$ (57,902)
	Reserve %	32.0%	21.7%	23.2%	22.4%	19.8%	27.1%	32.2%	35.1%	35.9%	34.6%	31.3%	26.1%	19.0%	10.2%	-0.3%
Incremental 2028(50/25)/ +5yr(10/5)	Reserve Balance	\$ 4,869,148	\$ 3,375,043	\$ 3,646,702	\$ 4,002,566	\$ 4,434,878	\$ 4,935,529	\$ 5,496,359	\$ 6,108,926	\$ 6,366,414	\$ 6,259,953	\$ 5,780,450	\$ 4,918,585	\$ 3,664,807	\$ 2,009,323	\$ (57,902)
	Reserve %	32.0%	21.7%	23.2%	24.9%	27.1%	29.5%	32.2%	35.1%	35.9%	34.6%	31.3%	26.1%	19.0%	10.2%	-0.3%
Reserve Balance = Total Reserve Funds remaining in the State Bar Fund																
Reserve % = Reserve Fund as a percentage of the preceding year's Operating Expenditures																