



South Dakota Paralegal Association, Inc.

Founded in 1989

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Update on Proposed Changes to Paralegal Statutes November 1, 2007

The Professional Development Committee had been spearheading proposed changes to SDCL 16-18-34 through 16-18-34.7, the statutes governing paralegals in South Dakota. The proposed changes removed the term “legal assistant” and used the term “paralegal” exclusively along with tightening the qualifications to be a paralegal in South Dakota. After voting to approve the changes at their annual meeting in June of 2006, the State Bar of South Dakota submitted the proposed legislation to the South Dakota Supreme Court for consideration at the rules hearing that was held on February 15, 2007. Tom Barnett of the South Dakota State Bar; Marya Vrooman Rogers, Chair of the Paralegal Committee of the State Bar; and Teri Braun, Chair of the SDPA Professional Development Committee spoke as proponents to the changes. Dean Nasser, an attorney from Sioux Falls, spoke as an opponent of the changes.

Unfortunately, Marya Vrooman Rogers, chair of the Paralegal Committee of the State Bar, received a phone call on October 26, 2007, from Chief Justice Gilbertson stating the Court was not going to take action on the proposal. Apparently the Justices had a great deal of discussion, but are not inclined to take any action at this time. The Professional Development Committee will be discussing options with the Paralegal Committee of the State Bar to decide the next move.

Respectfully submitted,

Teri J. Braun, B.S., CP

Chair, Profession Development Committee