



OWBA Statement In Support of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

The Executive Board of the Ohio Women's Bar Association values diversity, equity and inclusion.

Our mission is to maintain the integrity of the legal profession; foster communication among women attorneys; promote opportunities and advance the position of women attorneys to more accurately reflect the role of women in a democratic society; ensure women attorneys' participation in bar associations; monitor legislation, policies and practices affecting women's advancement, seeking changes where necessary; and provide continuing legal education and other information relevant to women in the community and legal profession. We are open to all; we exclude no one based on sex, gender identity, race, religion, immigration status, ethnic background or any other characteristic. We are non-partisan and do not advocate for or against any specific piece of legislation or candidate. That said, the beliefs that women in our profession deserve equitable treatment, women's voices should be included without discrimination, and a diversity of backgrounds and viewpoints benefits all, are integral to our reason for existing. We will continue to stand up for these beliefs.

Qualified women, in the legal profession and beyond, have benefited from opportunities to compete for roles, enter into, and thrive within their respective fields, where they were previously denied these opportunities not based on merit, but solely because of their gender. Both government and the private sector have reaped the benefits of including women and other diverse groups in their workforce, including increased creativity, improved collaboration, diverse perspectives in decision-making, higher profitability, better employee retention and a more positive work culture. Women and diverse voices bring unique skills and approaches to problem-solving that enhance overall performance.

We have made significant strides, but there is still much work to be done. We invite you to visit the U.S. Department of Labor Women's Bureau website and review the statistics regarding the continued wage disparity between women and men in the private sector ([Data and Statistics | U.S. Department of Labor](#)). The data prove that intentional programs and initiatives to combat the effects of discrimination are still vital to protecting women and their economic security.

Further, we firmly reject the idea that oppressing one disadvantaged group will protect another. The suppression of diverse voices and disregard for basic concepts of justice and equity are antithetical to our mission. Our profession uniquely positions us to protect others. We have a moral and professional obligation to do so. When we became lawyers, each of us swore an oath to uphold the Constitution and the laws of the United States and the State of Ohio. We will continue to uphold those laws to advance diversity, foster inclusion and protect all citizens.