



### **Law Society Motions Regarding the Statement of Principles: June 27**

On June 27, 2019, the Law Society of Ontario will consider two motions regarding the Statement of Principles, including whether it should be repealed or made voluntary (with an annual reporting requirement to Convocation on the number of licensees who choose to adopt such a statement).

As we have said before, the Federation of Asian Canadian Lawyers of Ontario (“FACL Ontario”) believes that the Statement of Principles is an appropriate measure to address the challenges faced by racialized licensees, bearing in mind that it is only part of 1 of the 13 recommendations adopted by the Law Society after extensive consultation and study. It is a privilege to be a lawyer, not a right. Requiring lawyers to acknowledge their obligation to promote equality, diversity and inclusion is no different than requiring lawyers to swear an oath to ensure access to justice and improve the administration of justice. But even those who object to this requirement on the basis of compelled speech cannot quarrel with the voluntary Statement of Principles being proposed. At minimum, lawyers should be encouraged to reflect on how they can improve equality, diversity and inclusion in the profession and beyond, and the Law Society has a legitimate interest in keeping track of the number of licensees who do so.

FACL Ontario believes it is fundamental to the Law Society’s mandate to promote equality, diversity and inclusion. A more diverse and inclusive profession is one that better serves the public. If we hope to maintain the public’s confidence in the administration of justice and preserve self-regulation, we must model these values as a profession. We look forward to working with all members of Convocation and the profession more broadly to achieve these ends.

Please join us at Convocation on June 27, 2019 at 9am (Donald Lamont Learning Centre) as we signal our support for equality, diversity and inclusion.