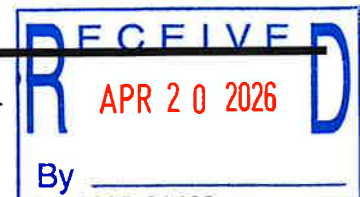


Kim Meador

From: Michele Cummings <mcummings481@sendgrassroots.com>
Sent: Monday, April 20, 2026 2:52 PM
To: appellatecourtclerk
Subject: Expand Legal Help in Tennessee: Teacher's Comments on No. ADM2025-01403



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Dear Clerk Hivner and Honorable Justices of the Tennessee Supreme Court,

I am writing in response to the Court's request for comments on the regulation of the legal profession and Tennessee's access-to-justice crisis. I strongly support the Tennessee Supreme Court allowing people without law degrees—like legal helpers or community justice workers—to deliver legal services and help with basic civil legal needs.

My role at my school is truancy/clerical/teacher, and my school's community needs more access to civil legal help because most families do not have access due to financial/time/transportation constraints, and if they do they do not feel safe and don't know who or if they can trust. I support trained nonlawyers playing a role in addressing civil legal issues because it will help to fill very deep holes that are really really needed and will help heal needs that will eventually cause very expensive problems if not addressed.

I would want legal helpers to have oversight by an organization or company; short subject-matter training that can be done online; and a database of resources they can refer to, to connect with resources already available that may not be known. I would want legal helpers to be able to assist with any civil legal matter.

I encourage the Court to focus on low-barrier solutions that make basic legal help accessible and approachable. Nonlawyers could complete short, practical training focused on specific subjects and could provide assistance through trusted institutions such as nonprofits, libraries, faith groups, and businesses.

The Court should also recognize that certain forms of basic legal assistance are low-risk activities that should fall outside Unauthorized Practice of Law restrictions. Creating clear carveouts for this type of help would expand access without sacrificing consumer protection. Tennesseans already benefit from existing consumer protection laws that safeguard against misconduct.

I'm grateful that the Tennessee Supreme Court is leading this effort to reform and modernize our legal system. Thank you for the opportunity to weigh in on this important issue.

Sincerely,

Michele Cummings

Chattanooga, TN
mcummings481@gmail.com