



June 28, 2006

Subject: Notice of Proposed Name Change

Dear ATLA Member,

As you know, ATLA embarked on an unprecedented public education and communications campaign last year to educate the public on the importance of the civil justice system and the lawyers who work in it.

Last week, the ATLA Board of Governors voted 91-5 to recommend to the membership that we change the name of our association to the American Association for Justice. **The name can only be changed by a vote of the membership which will take place on July 19 at the ATLA Seattle convention.**

The goal of our communications campaign is to tell the public the true story about who we are and what we are fighting for. Our research shows that if our message is about helping lawyers, we lose. On the other hand, if we're about getting justice and holding wrongdoers accountable, we win.

Our current name – the Association of Trial Lawyers of America – is all about us. It describes *who we are*. In contrast, our proposed new name – the American Association for Justice – is about *what we do*. And what we do is fight for justice – for our clients and all Americans each and every day.

When you and I are in the courtroom, we work hard to frame our case for the jury. We help the jury understand why our client deserves justice. The court of public opinion works the same way. And a name change is the logical next step in a larger effort to change the way we communicate our role in protecting and strengthening the civil justice system.

The name change will be considered at the Membership Business Meeting during the Annual Convention, in the Princessa Ballroom of the Grand Hyatt Seattle at 8:00 am on Wednesday, July 19.

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The language of the proposed bylaw change is as follows:

Changing the Name of the Association

Existing Article I of the Bylaws is amended as follows (new language shown in bolded italics):

Article I – Name

The name of the Association shall be ~~The Association of Trial Lawyers of America~~ ***The American Association for Justice***, hereinafter referred to as The Association.

I believe we ought to have a full and spirited debate among the membership before we make this decision. That's why we'll have five opportunities for ATLA members to hear the research, ask questions and voice their opinions. I hope you'll be able to join one of these.

The first of those five opportunities will be via a conference call and web presentation on Tuesday, July 11, 2006 at 3:00 p.m. Eastern time. **The dial in numbers for the conference call are as follows: (U.S.): (800) 811-8845 (International): (913) 981-4905 and the access code is: 6839446.**

The web address for the web based presentation is:

<https://www.livemeeting.com/cc/vcc/join?id=w6839446&role=attend&pw=A683944>

Please test your browser for compatibility at the following URL prior to the event date:

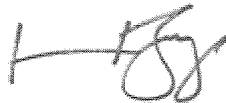
<http://www.livemeeting.com/cc/vcsales/join?id=GPMN4J&role=attend&pw=XHGS8K>

At the convention, there will be four forums, all taking place at the convention center:

- Sunday, July 16, 9:30-10:30 am in room 4C-4
- Sunday, July 16, 3:30-4:30 pm in room 4C-4
- Monday, July 17, 4:30-5:30 pm in room 4C-2
- Tuesday, July 18, 9:30-10:30 am in room 4C-4

I look forward to speaking with you more about this important decision as this process moves forward, and I hope to see you at the convention.

Sincerely,



Ken Suggs, ATLA President

Questions and Answers About Changing ATLA's Name to the American Association for Justice

For more information:

Join the conference call on Tuesday, July 11th, 2006 at 3:00 p.m. Eastern time. The conference call numbers are as follows: (U.S.): (800) 811-8845 (International): (913) 981-4905 and the access code is 6839446.

Also, be sure to view the web based presentation by visiting this web address:

<https://www.livemeeting.com/cc/vcc/join?id=w6839446&role=attend&pw=A683944> .

Due to turnout, it is recommended that you join the call and the web based presentation 15 minutes before the starting time.

Attend one of the open forums at the ATLA annual convention in Seattle at the convention center:

- Sunday, July 16, 9:30-10:30 am in room 4C-4
- Sunday, July 16, 3:30-4:30 pm in room 4C-4
- Monday, July 17, 4:30-5:30 pm in room 4C-2
- Tuesday, July 18, 9:30-10:30 am in room 4C-4

Why is ATLA considering changing its name to the American Association for Justice?

Corporate America has spent billions of dollars to define ATLA as a special interest group. You asked us to fight back and we are. We've launched an aggressive public education campaign to improve the image of trial lawyers, as well as to protect and strengthen the civil justice system. Our campaign is about helping us win back the public in both the jury box and the ballot box.

We conducted the research to tell us how to best reframe the debate, then hired the staff and built the infrastructure to enhance our ability to rapidly respond to attacks. We're making a difference with the media, driving our storyline, hitting back with ads on television and in newspapers, using emerging techniques on the internet to target new audiences and taking the fight to the home turf of our opponents in Congress.

Now it's time to take the next step. We know from our research that if our message is or seems to be only about helping lawyers, we lose. On the other hand, if we concentrate on protecting the civil justice system from greedy corporate CEOs, we win.

ATLA's current name is about what we call ourselves, not what we do. Our mission is not about helping ourselves, but rather about protecting and strengthening the civil justice system for everyone. Our name should be about *what we do, not who we are*.

Why now?

It's the logical next step in our communications effort. We learned from our polling that the majority of the public does not understand our mission when we use our current name. Using the American Association for Justice will help us better communicate our mission – and help us win back the public.

When will we change the name?

If the membership approves – by a two-thirds vote – changing our name to the American Association for Justice, the earliest it would likely go into effect would be sometime after the November election.

How was the American Association for Justice selected?

We looked at many options but in the end the right name needed to meet three criteria. First, our name has to make sense to our members and the public. Second, we wanted to avoid trademarks and other conflicts.

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Third, it has to send the right message. Names with the words “justice” and “association” help us meet the above-mentioned criteria. We also found in our research that the words “trial” and “legal” were not that meaningful to the public. ATLA’s Board of Governors recommended, by a vote of 91-5, to send only one name to the membership – the American Association for Justice, which meets all three of the criteria.

Are name changes typical for associations such as ours?

Yes. National professional organizations change their names all the time, and most don't highlight their members in their names, but their missions. Two are the American Medical Association and the National Education Association. Their names reflect what they do, not what their members call themselves.

Even our opponents have done the same. For example, the Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Association of America changed its name to Pharma.

Do I have to be present to vote?

Yes. ATLA’s bylaws and election rules require that you must attend the membership meeting to vote, specifically that you be a paid registrant at the convention who has been a member or has applied for membership at least 60 days prior. Membership meetings only take place at the annual and winter conventions.

Will we still call ourselves trial lawyers?

We will always be trial lawyers, and we will always call ourselves that proudly. But we must communicate more strategically and clearly about why we are proud to be trial lawyers and why what we do is important. When people hear our name, they should know what we do, what we fight for.

What will the other side say and how we will react?

Whatever we do, the opponents of the civil justice system will attack us. If the membership changes the name to the American Association for Justice, we will move to pre-empt them before they attack us and will roll-out our new name in the most positive light. In the end, having a name that better communicates our mission will help us defend the civil justice system from attacks by the other side.

Won't the press just report the new name with the caveat, "formerly ATLA"?

Experience has shown us that when organizations change their names, media coverage reports the former name for a short period of time, then stops referring to it at all. For instance, stories covering the Consumer Attorneys of California, which changed from the California Trial Lawyers Association, do not mention the former name.

While media coverage is important, changing our name is not just about media. A name change is the logical next step in a larger effort to change the way we communicate the role of trial lawyers and the importance of the civil justice system.

How much will this cost?

Estimated costs – changing stationery, business cards, etc. – will be under \$150,000 although most of these items have to be reordered periodically anyway, even if we didn’t change our name.

Will the state trial lawyer associations change too?

That’s entirely up to them. Certain states are actively considering a name change along with ATLA, and others were considering name changes before this discussion began. But any decisions would be made by the state associations themselves.

For more information, contact Erin Taylor, Director of State Affairs, at 202-965-3500 ext. 446 or at erin.taylor@atlahq.org.