STATE OF NEW YORK

10367

IN SENATE

May 15, 2026

Introduced by Sen. SEPULVEDA -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Judiciary

AN ACT to amend the judiciary law and the general business law, in relation to the unlawful practice of law

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

Section 1. Section 476-a of the judiciary law, as added by chapter 310 of the laws of 1962, subdivision 1 as amended by chapter 709 of the laws of 1965, the opening paragraph of subdivision 1 and subdivision 2 as amended by chapter 91 of the laws of 2010, is amended to read as follows:

§ 476-a. Action for unlawful practice of the law. 1. The attorney-general may maintain an action upon [~~his or her~~] **the attorney-general's** own information or upon the complaint of a private person or of a bar association organized and existing under the laws of this state against any person, partnership, corporation, or association, and any employee, agent, director, or officer thereof who commits any act or engages in any conduct prohibited by law as constituting the unlawful practice of the law. The term "action" as used in this subdivision shall be construed to include both civil actions and criminal actions.

2. The term "unlawful practice of the law" as used in this article shall include, but is not limited to,

(a) any act prohibited by [~~penal law sections two~~] **section four** hundred [~~seventy~~] **seventy-eight**, [~~two~~] **four** hundred [~~seventy-a~~] **seventy-nine**, [~~two~~] **four** hundred [~~seventy-e~~] **eighty-three**, [~~two~~] **four** hundred [~~seventy-one~~] **eighty-four**, [~~two~~] **four** hundred [~~seventy-five~~] **eighty-nine**, [~~two~~] **four** hundred [~~seventy-five-a~~] **ninety**, [~~two~~] **four** hundred [~~seventy-six~~] **ninety-one**, [~~two hundred eighty~~] or [~~fourteen~~] **four** hundred [~~fifty-two~~] **ninety-five of this article, or section three hundred thirty-seven of the general business law**, or

(b) any other act forbidden by law to be done by any person not regularly licensed and admitted to practice law in this state, or

EXPLANATION--Matter in *italics* (underscored) is new; matter in brackets [-] is old law to be omitted.

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(c) any act punishable by the supreme court as a criminal contempt of court under **subdivision B of** section seven hundred [~~**fifty-B**~~] **fifty** of this chapter.

[~~**2.**~~] **3.** Such a civil action may also be maintained by a bar association organized and existing under the laws of the state of New York, upon an application to the supreme court of the state of New York, or a justice thereof, for leave to bring the same by such bar association on good cause shown therefor and proof that a written request was made upon the attorney-general to bring such an action and that more than twenty days have elapsed since the making of such request and [~~**he or she**~~] **the attorney-general** has failed or refused to bring such an action.

§ 2. Section 496 of the judiciary law, as added by chapter 706 of the law of 1979, is amended to read as follows:

§ 496. **Statement to be filed by organizations offering legal services.** An organization described in subdivision seven of section four hundred ninety-five of this article shall file with the appellate division department in which its principal office is located a statement describing the nature and purposes of the organization, the composition of its governing body, the type of legal services being made available, and the names and addresses of any attorneys and counselors-at-law employed by the organization or with whom commitments have been made. An updating of this information shall be furnished the appropriate appellate division on or before July first of each year and the names and addresses of attorneys and counselors-at-law who rendered legal services during that year shall be included.

§ 3. Section 336-b of the general business law, as added by chapter 495 of the laws of 1991, is renumbered section 336-c.

§ 4. Section 337 of the general business law, as added by chapter 1031 of the laws of 1965, is amended to read as follows.

§ 337. Advertising to procure divorces. Whoever prints, publishes, distributes or circulates, or causes to be printed, published, distributed or circulated any circular, pamphlet, card, hand bill, advertisement, printed paper, book, newspaper or notice of any kind offering to advise on laws of any foreign state, nation or jurisdiction for the express purpose of procuring or aiding in procuring any divorce, severance, dissolution, or annulment [~~**or**~~] **of** any marriage, or offering to procure or to aid in procuring any divorce, or the severance, dissolution, or annulment of any marriage, or offering to engage, appear or act as attorney or counsel in any suit for alimony or divorce or the severance, dissolution or annulment of any marriage, either in this state or elsewhere, is guilty of a misdemeanor. This section shall not apply to the printing or publishing of any notice or advertisement required or authorized by any law of this state.

§ 5. This act shall take effect on the first of January next succeeding the date on which it shall have become a law.