

RCW 7.96.010 Intent. Since the United States supreme court recognized the First Amendment limitations on the common law tort of defamation and defamation-like torts, courts have struggled to achieve a balance between constitutionally protected guarantees of free expression and the need to protect citizens from reputational harm. Unlike personal injuries, harm to reputation can often be cured by means other than money damages. The correction or clarification of a published statement may restore a person's reputation more quickly and more thoroughly than a victorious lawsuit. The salutary effect of a correction or clarification is enhanced if it is published reasonably soon after a statement is made.

Chapter 294, Laws of 2013 seeks to provide strong incentives for individuals to promptly correct or clarify an alleged false statement as an alternative to costly litigation. The options created by chapter 294, Laws of 2013 provide an opportunity for a plaintiff who believes he or she has been harmed by a false statement to secure quick and complete vindication of his or her reputation. Chapter 294, Laws of 2013 provides publishers with a quick and cost-effective means of correcting or clarifying alleged mistakes and avoiding costly litigation. [2013 c 294 § 1.]