The PBA is the voice for the legal profession on Capitol Hill in Harrisburg. PBA's legislative staff has its fingers directly on the pulse of legislative issues, and if you need timely and thorough information about pending legislation, the PBA can be your top resource. Take advantage of this outstanding membership benefit and stay informed about legislative developments through this column or the legislative area on the PBA website at www.pabar.org.

Bills Supported by the PBA Progressing in the General Assembly


HB 286 — The Uniform Child Abduction Prevention Act, sponsored by Rep. Debeah Kula, permits a court to order abduction prevention measures in a child custody proceeding upon finding a credible abduction risk, and provides enforcement remedies if abduction occurs after a custody determination. The bill received first consideration in the House on Feb. 12.

Senate Bill 84 — The Deficiency Judgment Act, sponsored by Sen. Stewart Greenleaf, establishes the time frame and procedure for pursuing a deficiency judgment (DJ) following a sheriff’s sale of real property secured by a mortgage or judgment. A DJ results when a creditor purchases a judgment debtor's real property from a sheriff’s sale but believes the value of the property is less than the amount owed. SB 84 passed the Senate unanimously on Feb. 12 and was then referred to the House Judiciary Committee.

SB 381 — Sponsored by Sen. John Eichelberger Jr., this legislation provides limited but key UCC, Article 9 (secured transactions), changes. Most significantly, it defines an individual borrower's correct name on the relevant secured transaction paperwork: the name on the borrower's Pennsylvania driver's license or non-driver's license PennDOT-issued ID card. For those without either ID, the borrower's individual name or surname and first personal name is to be used. The bill received first consideration in the Senate on Feb. 5 and was then re-referred to the Senate Appropriations Committee.

For a complete update on the status of all bills on which the PBA has a position, check the PBA Legislative Boxscore at www.pabar.org/public/legislative/Boxscorebar_box.htm or contact the PBA Legislative Department at 800-932-0311.

Making a Difference

The Pennsylvania Bar News column that highlights Pennsylvania attorneys who make a difference in their communities by providing extraordinary pro bono service and/or other legal services in the public interest.

Steven F. Fairlie, North Wales

Steven F. Fairlie of Fairlie & Lippy PC in North Wales, Montgomery County, is a member of the PBA Solo and Small Firm Practice Section. He was a presenter for the section’s conference in July and is a regular presenter for the Pennsylvania Bar Institute’s Annual Criminal Law Symposium.

Describe your pro bono work.

My pro bono work is varied and includes organizing the court-appointment list for the Montgomery County Court of Common Pleas, handling court-appointed matters, representing children who otherwise would not have access to lawyers, representing those in my community who are obviously in need, teaching a civics class for underprivileged children, representing a volunteer fire company and handling matters where I believe an injustice needs to be remedied. In a recent case the second owners of a leaking home had their lawsuit against the builder dismissed at the trial court level. My associate Chris Bradley and I appealed the case to the Superior Court and won.

Why do you participate in pro bono?

I handle pro bono cases because they are a win-win situation. Helping others is just as rewarding to the lawyer as it is to the client.

How did you become involved?

I became involved immediately after I left the district attorney's office. I wanted to build a caseload quickly so I took pro bono and court-appointed cases.

Have your pro bono cases dealt with legal issues different from your regular practice areas? If so, how did you adapt?

Like others, I have gone outside my expertise with some pro bono work. However, when that happens I try to get someone with the appropriate experience involved. I don't think pro bono clients are any less deserving of knowledge and experience than paying clients. I am not a fan of lawyers handling matters outside of their expertise merely because the matter is handled pro bono.

What have been the personal rewards?

There is nothing more rewarding than winning a case on behalf of a client who would not have had access to the legal system without you.

PBA Working for You on the Hill

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