



Monte E. Frank is the 93rd president of the CBA. He is a principal in Cohen and Wolf's Litigation and Municipal Groups, representing business and municipal clients in the state and federal courts in Connecticut on a wide range of matters. He works from the firm's Danbury and Bridgeport offices.

Your Voice at the Capitol

By Monte E. Frank

As I write this, the 2017 legislative session in Hartford is underway. Bill Chapman, our government and community relations manager, and CBA lobbyists, Bobby Shea, and Melissa Biggs, are reaching out to sections for positions, scouring bills, meeting with lawmakers, and trying to make sense out of the constantly changing landscape in the Connecticut General Assembly. After serving as the chair of the Legislative Policy and Review Committee for two years and now as your president, I am amazed at how much the association accomplishes for our members and the people of Connecticut through our efforts at the Capitol. We will remain active this session to make sure that our concerns are heard and our legislative agenda is pursued.

Legislative Agenda

In the past couple years, the CBA scored big wins at the legislature and we are now seeing our prior positions become law, including the new LLC Act, updated Power of Attorney Act, Digital Assets Act, Veteran Owned Small Businesses Act, legal aid funding, and the Civil Gideon Task Force report, to name a few. For this session, our sections and committees have worked hard to achieve authorized positions which are summarized in our published legislative agenda at ctbar.org/Legisla-

[tiveAffairs](#). It includes positions to make Connecticut's legal structure more business friendly; to assist our veterans; to oppose a sales tax on legal services; and advance positions from elder law, family law, trusts and estates, and others. I anticipate that the new Opioid Addiction Task Force, chaired by Ralph Monaco, to have legislative positions as well. Finally, as you read this, many of our section and committee leaders will have testified at the general assembly. I am grateful for their leadership and service to the CBA.

Budget

In this legislative session, like the last one, the state budget consumes practically everything at the general assembly. We have attempted to move our bills without attaching a fiscal note where possible. We have also been strongly advocating that any state budget decisions related to judicial branch spending reductions should be made thoughtfully and with concern for the special role of the courts in the lives of Connecticut citizens. We have encouraged legislative leadership to seek out and listen to advice from the attorneys who work in the courts every day. Attorneys representing clients with cases before the courts have the most practical knowledge of where efficiencies can be realized without diminishing service and eroding

the rule of law. As conditions improve, we will ask Governor Dannel Malloy and the general assembly to revisit spending reductions made to the judicial branch during the last legislative session. Funding should be restored if that is what is necessary to ensure a properly functioning court system and access to justice for all.

However, we must also do our part in improving the economy. That is why I have challenged our sections and committees to come up with ways to improve the business climate and spur growth. The new LLC Act and the Veterans Owned Small Businesses Act are two examples where we have succeeded. There are many more proactive items in the works. We can also be a constructive partner in creating a more efficient or lean government. To move this forward, I have asked Vice-President Jonathan Shapiro to chair a task force on business regulation.

Judicial Reappointments

This year, 34 judges were up for reappointment. I spent a day with the Judiciary Committee listening to the questioning of judges and also offered my own testimony as to the importance of an independent and impartial judiciary. Our judges should decide cases based on statutes, regulations, and case law and not based on whether their rulings will subject them to ad hominem attack by disgruntled litigants. If Judicial Canons are violated, grievances should be filed. If a judge errs on the law, appeals should be pursued. None of the judges that were up for reappointment had a grievance sustained against them. They have served honorably and with integrity.

Civil Gideon

On December 15, 2016, the Connecticut Task Force to Improve Access to Legal Counsel in Civil Matters issued its final report and recommendations. I am proud to have served on this task force. The final report of the task force can be found on our Access to Justice Resource Page at ctbar.org/justice. The Connecticut Bar Association supports the findings of the task force. The recommendations offer a series of steps that can be taken immediately to help civil litigants most at risk of being denied adequate legal assistance. The focus on restraining orders, child custody, and

evictions targets the state's most vulnerable citizens. The task force responsibly addresses the added societal cost of offering these additional legal services with a series of funding recommendations and by laying out a multi-year strategy for wider implementation. Congratulations to former CBA President Bill Clendenen and UConn Law School Dean Timothy Fisher for their leadership. However, now comes the hard part, as we press the legislature

to adopt the task force's recommendations.

Please check back with me, your section or committee legislative liaison, or Bill Chapman for updates on our activities at the General Assembly. You can all follow Bill on Twitter @CTBarLeg or me @montefrank1, although my tweets fail to compare to *the* president's. Hey, I am just trying to make the bar great again. **CL**

We are pleased to announce that Jonathan A. Kaplan has become a Member of our Firm.



© Pullman & Comley, LLC

Jonathan A. Kaplan

Member

■ Litigation ■ Bankruptcy

860.424.4379 | jkaplan@pullcom.com

PULLMAN & COMLEY, LLC
ATTORNEYS

*Pulling Together.
Succeeding Together.*

pullcom.com
[@pullmancomley](https://twitter.com/pullmancomley)

BRIDGEPORT
203.330.2000

HARTFORD
860.424.4300

STAMFORD
203.324.5000

WATERBURY
203.573.9700

WHITE PLAINS
914.705.5355

ALAN BUDKOFSKY

BUDKOFSKY APPRAISAL CO.

Certified General Real Estate Appraiser

RESIDENTIAL • COMMERCIAL • EXPERT WITNESS

ONE REGENCY DRIVE, SUITE 109, BLOOMFIELD, CT 06002

E-Mail Budappraisal@hotmail.com

Phone 860-243-0007

www.BudkofskyAppraisal.com