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First Amendment Case Against Louisiana State Bar Association Dismissed

U.S. District Court Dismisses First Amendment Case Against Louisiana State Bar Association

In the latest example of a trend that seems to hold true for many integrated bars, last week, U.S. District Court Judge Lance Africk dismissed a case against the Louisiana State Bar Association. New Orleans attorney Randy Boudreaux claimed that being required to join the bar in order to practice in Louisiana violated his rights to freedom of speech and of association, but Africk ruled that the U.S. Supreme Court has already upheld the constitutionality of mandatory membership fees for integrated bars. [WBRZ.com](#) has more details, including what the judge said about a related claim regarding bar positions on certain issues.

Bankruptcy Judge Discharges Law School Debt, Rebukes Use of Hardship Test

Conventional wisdom says it's nearly impossible for people to discharge their student loan debt when they declare bankruptcy. Earlier this month, in U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the Southern District of New York, Chief Judge Cecelia Morris decided otherwise. Kevin Jared Rosenberg, who represented himself in this matter, had acquired \$221,000 in undergraduate and law school student loan debt. In deciding whether student loan debt can be discharged, judges use something called the "Brunner test," in which borrowers must meet three criteria to prove that they have made good faith efforts to repay their loans and that further repayment would cause undue hardship. What did Morris write in a strongly worded rebuke of how most judges apply the Brunner test? and what could this mean for other students seeking debt relief? Learn more at [law.com](#).

Not Just About the Money: 5 Reasons Lawyers Delay Planning for Retirement

Do a lot of your members seem to put off retiring, or even planning for it? If so, it may not just be because they lack enough financial resources to contemplate this step. Camille Stell, president of Lawyers Mutual Consulting & Services, says that many lawyers are fearful about letting go of their professional identity and winding down their practice. At [Attorney at Work](#), Stell lists five common retirement planning obstacles?which might give you some ideas for how to help members overcome them.

Connecticut Bar Association Launches Task Force to Study Regulation, Access to Justice

Connecticut is the latest addition to the list of states where bar task forces and other types of groups are exploring the legal profession, regulation, and access to justice. The Connecticut Bar Association State of the Legal Profession Task Force had its first meeting in December 2019 and aims to produce a report by 2021. What will the task force's subcommittees examine, and what does one high-profile member of its advisory committee think sets it apart from similar efforts in other states? Find out at [Above the Law](#).

National Conference of Bar Examiners Studying How Bar

Exams Assess Practice Skills

Questions about whether the typical bar exam accurately measures the skills required to be a good lawyer seem to have intensified in recent years?but in fact, they're nothing new. In 1980, a small group of California bar exam takers agreed to spend two additional days being put through various simulations to assess their practice skills. While this experiment did help spur some changes in California and beyond, many say there hasn't been much progress toward accurate skill assessment in recent decades. But could a report due by the end of this year by a National Conference of Bar Examiners task force lead to big changes? [ABA Journal](#) offers a comprehensive view of efforts to assess lawyering skills, and what could be next.

February Board Catalyst Webinar: Creating a Future-Focused Mindset

If, as Peter Drucker said, the greatest danger in times of turbulence is not the turbulence but "to act with yesterday's logic," how do we release ourselves from the restraints of tradition and keep our eyes on what's coming down the road? [Join lawyer and nonprofit expert Jess Birken](#) on February 5 to discuss the changing profession, our changing bars and how our boards can better equip themselves to meet tomorrow's challenges.



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