



## Second Report to Council

I apologize that it has been so long since my last report to council. Much has been happening in the Section, about which I would like to update you all.

1. Justice Kennedy Commission. In my first report to Council, I advised that I had been appointed to the Justice Kennedy Commission, whose charge it is to address the issue of mandatory minimum sentencing and other prison/sentencing. This has been an amazing learning experience for me. The Commission held three days of hearings in Washington D.C. last month, which I attended (the Commission is totally unfunded and the Section doesn't have the funds, so I participating in the Commission at my own expense). Individuals from all aspects of the judicial and penal system were invited to attend. Each of these individuals not only testified but submitted lengthy, formal written testimony. I learned that people take it very seriously when the ABA convenes hearings. We were inundated with materials and information. We have three reporters who have divided up the work amongst themselves. Each of us has been assigned to one of these reporters to assist. We are now synthesizing all of the voluminous materials we have been presented and attempting to formulate a response, proposals, etc. There will be additional hearings around the country and we will be meeting in San Antonio. It is a lot of work but I am learning an amazing amount and getting to work with terrific people. Steve Salzman, from Criminal Justice, is the Chair of the Commission. It has been a pleasure working with him. He was a law clerk to Thurgood Marshall and he wrote the opinion in Furman v. Georgia. Daunting company. Apparently, after the hearings in D.C., the ABA was inundated with calls and requests from people who wanted to get on this Commission. I am honored to be serving. It speaks well for our Section that we were invited. I will keep you all posted.

2. ABA Governance Review. As I reported, the ABA is undergoing its ten-year governance review. Dick Podell has been appointed to that committee. Additionally, the SOC has formed its own committee on governance review and the positions developed by the SOC committee will be transmitted to the ABA governance committee. Our two section delegates, Lynne and Tim, are on the SOC committee. There have been two conference calls so far so the work of this committee is underway.

3. ABA Committee on Section Relations. I reported to you that President Archer had appointed a six-person Section Relations Committee to address the problems that were brought to light as a result of the head tax debacle and I am one of the three section people on that committee. The Committee was finally convened for the first time on December 9 by phone. We will be receiving the preliminary budget from Allen Joseph, the ABA treasurer, shortly, after which he will walk us through it. There are no final figures yet but there will be a shortfall of several million dollars and the ABA is

looking for places to cut. He acknowledged that one of the things they will be looking at is how money is allocated to Sections. There is no way that the Sections are not going to take a significant hit in making up the shortfall. I will keep you posted on this very serious issue.

4. Sponsorship. First the bad news. LexisNexis unfortunately turned down our request for sponsorship. I had a lengthy conversation with Nigel Roberts, the individual to whom we made our presentation. He was very impressed with the high level presentation that we made. Lexis is having budget problems and did not see this as an opportunity at this time. However, he made clear to me that he would like to keep the door open on future discussions, which we will. As you all know, you passed the Sustaining Member program at the fall council meeting. We will be sending you a personal letter in the next couple of days and then a letter to all Section members shortly after that. In light of what I learned yesterday about the future of Section finances, we are going to have to raise a lot of non-dues revenue to even stay in business.

5. CLE teleconferences. The second CLE teleconference was yesterday and was an Ethics program. We had over 100 people on the call. It was a great success. Lew Becker put together outstanding materials (as usual) and the panelists were all terrific. Our members love this new feature. The next teleconference is scheduled for February 11 and will be Lynne Gold-Bikin and Steve Kolodny doing a program on trial practice, which will not only be a great program but will help us market their book, The Divorce Trial Manual and the Institute. We expect very large numbers of people to attend this program. We are making money on the teleconferences. We netted \$15,000.00 on the first one on tax. Scott Friedman is doing an outstanding job heading up this new project.

6. Outreach to YLD and LSD. As a result of our outreach efforts to law students and young lawyers, we have picked up close to 400 new members net. We are very excited about this. We are putting a "new in practice" column in the Advocate. We have just sent a blast e-mail to all members of both Divisions asking them again to join our section. We have submitted a joint CLE proposal with the YLD for a program on celebrity divorce to be done in Atlanta at the annual meeting. We are waiting to see if that program has been approved. We have obtained a list of all law schools and we are in the process of asking people to do law student outreach panels in their city. If you live in a city with a law school, you will be hearing from me shortly.

7. Working Group on Alternative Unions. The Working Group has been hard at work. The Group is in the process of defining what our "white paper" is going to look like. The Group will be meeting at its own expense in San Antonio to begin the process of writing. We now have liaisons from several other sections. This is a very committed group of people.

8. Resolution with IRR. As you know, I convened an emergency council meeting by telephone on November 19. I appreciate all of your attendance. As you know from the e-mail that I sent out, the resolution, which asks the ABA to oppose any attempt on the part of the federal government to encroach on the rights of states to define the terms of marriage, has been submitted to the House of Delegates. We have a lot of work to do between now and February in terms of getting support from other delegates.

9. Online Resource Center. The Center has been launched. People are using it. We need people to continue to upload documents. I am very proud of this product.

10. E-newsletter. A few weeks ago you received the second edition of the e-newsletter. We are getting a lot of very positive response to this new feature.
11. Listserve. We have continued to have problems with famlawesq. I am sure that most of you are following this. You will be asked to approve a letter that I will be posting on the list serve on behalf of the Officers and Council.
12. Spring meeting. We are doing very well in terms of sponsorships for San Juan. Many people have already booked their rooms. The CLE is in very good shape and we are getting ready to do the brochure.
13. Military Training. At the council meeting in Seattle, Trish Apy made a presentation on behalf of LAMP and asked that we agree to offer free registration to legal services personnel in San Juan. We are doing something even better. The Section will be conducting a full day training program on Wednesday, April 28 for the legal services personnel from Fort Buchanan. We will be hosting this event and hopefully we will be able to find a sponsor for lunch for the attendees. I am incredibly excited about this program. There will be approximately seven one-hour segments. We are in the process of identifying the topics and the speakers and we will be putting the materials together. Mark Sullivan is heading up this effort and he is working closely with Trish. Mark has been in touch with the JAG officer at the base and they are very excited about our doing this program for them. I have also proposed that we duplicate this program when we are in Atlanta this summer. I think this is an incredible service that the Section can offer to the legal services personnel. A substantial number of the legal issues that arise are family-law related and this program will be of enormous assistance. I am very excited that we are doing this and proud of our Section.
14. Committee Liaison Outreach. Please do not forget that you have each been assigned as a liaison to Section committees. Please give your committee chair a call to see what you can do to be of assistance to the committee. The committee will appreciate it. Remind them that they should be uploading documents to the Online Resource Center and doing articles for the newsletter, as well as looking for authors for the Advocate.

I think that this concludes what I have to report at this time. I would like to once again thank all of you for your hard work and wish each of you a happy and healthy holiday season.