



Virginia State Bar

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To All Members of the Virginia State Bar:

It has been a high honor and a privilege for me to serve as your Executive Director and Chief Operating Officer for the past nineteen years. You have been generous in allowing me to do the job with considerable independence and the freedom to tackle the issues we have faced in the way the bar's officers and I thought best—usually with your strong support and encouragement.

I am particularly proud of the outstanding bar leaders and staff with whom I have had the pleasure of working during these almost two decades, and I shall remember them with great respect and fondness as I move into retirement at the end of 2007. We have made major strides in the effective handling of all our regulatory work during this period, and the disciplinary system has been rendered more open and transparent, thus improving public confidence in our process. When additional resources were determined to be needed for this purpose by the bar staff and our regulatory committees, you, through approval by the VSB Council, the Supreme Court of Virginia, and the General Assembly, never failed to provide them.

The bar's information systems software has been completely rewritten and all databases integrated during the past several years, our hardware has been modernized, and a new and more functional telephone system is on order. All of this will enable the bar to deal more efficiently and effectively with its members and the public, as well as deliver more information and services electronically. More work in this area will need to be done in the future, but we have made a good start.

The significant strengthening of the Clients' Protection Fund is also a source of great satisfaction and pride for me, as we have worked to increase the corpus of the fund through frequent transfers from the bar's reserves or operating budgets over the years. Beginning this year, a special twenty-five dollar assessment was authorized for each of the next several years from all active members, with the funds earmarked for the CPF. At the end of that time, the Virginia State Bar will have one of the most secure of these funds in the country, assuring clients of those few lawyers who defraud or steal from them that all likely future claims can be satisfied from earnings on the fund without further contributions from bar members.

Thank you again for allowing me to serve the bar in this way. I hope you will all continue to insist on outstanding results and good stewardship of the bar's resource in the future, and that you will give my successor, Karen Gould, the same support you have given me during my tenure.

Sincerely,

Thomas A. Edmonds