



## MY OPINION

BY BUCK FILES

PRESIDENT, STATE BAR OF TEXAS

# Service to Members

**O**n May 29, I drove from Tyler to Austin for a meeting that was scheduled for 10:30 the following morning. At 9:30 that night, I realized that I had failed to pack a white shirt and that the orange pullover I was wearing would not compliment my three-piece navy blue suit. Did panic set in? Of course not. I knew that I could go to a Brooks Brothers store, buy a white shirt, *and get a 15 percent discount because I'm a member of the State Bar of Texas.*

The State Bar of Texas is proud of the programs that it offers to its members. Our continuing legal education courses are the envy of other state bars around the country. Our Texas Lawyers' Assistance Program helped more than 800 lawyers last year — they truly take care of their own. When I talk to lawyers from around the state, they want to know just one thing: What benefits am I getting for my Bar dues? And they mean goods and services.

For the past year, I have met with the executive directors and/or officers of the Texas District and County Attorneys Association, the Texas Criminal Defense Lawyers Association, the Texas Trial Lawyers Association, and the Texas Association of Defense Counsel. At each of these meetings, I have talked about the economic benefits — and this includes discounts on numerous goods and services — that a Texas lawyer receives because of his or her State Bar membership.

Because so few lawyers are aware of these member discounts, I decided it was worth writing about them in this column. Discounts on the following goods and services are available to *you* because of your membership in the State Bar of Texas. To take advantage of them, just visit the State Bar website at [texasbar.com/discounts](http://texasbar.com/discounts).

### CLOTHING

Brooks Brothers gives a 15 percent discount to lawyers who enroll in their program.

### AUTOMOBILE RENTALS

Virtually every association has car rental benefits, and we are no different. The State Bar has agreements with Alamo, Avis, Budget, Enterprise, Hertz, and National Car Rental.

### FINANCIAL SERVICES

Both the ABA Retirement Funds Program and Bank of America provide services to our lawyers.

### HOME & OFFICE

FedEx Office saved Texas lawyers who participated in their program \$388,000 over the last year. Other home office benefits you can access include Office Depot and Steelcase, Inc.

### INSURANCE

Geico offers free quotes on a variety of policies. The State Bar of Texas Insurance Trust is working diligently to be able to offer lower rates than it has in the past.

### LAWYER-SPECIFIC PROGRAMS

CoreVault, ESQsites, Legal Directories, and LawPay are designed to help lawyers with their day-to-day practices.

Other goods and services offering discounts include computers and electronics, such as Dell, HP, Panasonic, Philips, Samsung, Sharp, and T-Mobile; health and wellness products and services, such as AC Lens, Nutrisystem, Reebok, and The Walking Company; automotive purchase plans, such as Toyota and TRUECar; consumer products, such as Godiva Chocolatier, FTD, Potsand-

pans.com, and Wine.com; and travel and entertainment packages, such as discounts on Cirque du Soleil shows, Las Vegas and New York shows, Orlando attractions, and resort vacations.

If you take advantage of all — or even some — of these benefits, you have the potential to save more money than you spend for your Bar dues. ✪

## MythBusters

**The Myth:** The State Bar of Texas is run by the big city/big firm lawyers.

**The Problem:** There are so many Texas lawyers — 49,884 — practicing in the Austin, Dallas, Fort Worth, Houston, and San Antonio metropolitan areas and only 30,775 lawyers practicing in the rest of the state.

**The Truth:** The officers, directors, and committee members of the State Bar of Texas represent *all* the lawyers of Texas. The State Bar Board of Directors has 30 elected directors. Seventeen of these are from the five metropolitan areas; the other 13 are from Amarillo, Beaumont, Boerne, College Station, El Paso, Granbury, Hillsboro, Jacksonville, Kaufman, Laredo, Lubbock, Richmond, and Rockport.

In appointing lawyers and judges to committees this year, I named 140 appointees from the metropolitan cities and 131 appointees from the rest of the state. These included lawyers and judges from Canton, Lacy Lakeview, Gilmer, Sweetwater, Mineola, Little Elm, Groesbeck, and Eagle Pass.

At least every third year, the President-elect will come from a non-metropolitan city. Immediate Past President Bob Black is a mediator from Beaumont and I am a criminal defense lawyer from Tyler — and we really aren't big city/big firm lawyers.