



## Your State Bar Directors **AT WORK**

**IT'S A THURSDAY AFTERNOON IN THE MIDDLE OF SUMMER** and several dozen attorneys and other professionals from across Texas have traveled to the Westin Galleria Houston. Despite the location, the objective isn't shopping. They are gathered in a hotel ballroom to engage in deep thinking and strategic planning—all for your benefit.

The State Bar of Texas Board of Directors meets every other July for a strategic planning workshop before the Local Bar Leaders Conference. This workshop is in addition to the quarterly regular meetings of the board—not to mention the countless hours that directors spend reviewing agenda materials, corresponding with constituents, and holding committee and subcommittee meetings.

Asking them to give up part of a summer week for more unpaid bar work might seem like a tough sell. Unless, that is, you know our directors. No one is complaining as I survey the meeting room. In fact, everyone is fully engaged in the task at hand.

The board is divided into small groups to review sections of the State Bar's 2021-2026 strategic plan and determine whether any updates are needed. The strategic plan includes “big picture” objectives including:

- serving the public through education and community outreach,
- serving members by providing superior services,
- protecting the public through the grievance system,
- ensuring access to justice for all, and
- using best practices in all State Bar operations.

Each strategic goal is followed by action items designed to help the bar achieve its objectives. Around the meeting tables, directors are discussing the action items, questioning whether they are measurable or if they fully encompass lessons learned from the pandemic. As they share ideas later during a large group debriefing, it's clear that this board—though representing many different perspectives—is united in its desire to make the legal profession in Texas the best it can be.

Why am I writing about this? First, it's important for Texas lawyers and the public we serve to know that the 46 voting directors and 14 nonvoting members of the State Bar board are true servant-leaders who have your best interests at heart. Second, to truly do their jobs as directors, they need to hear from you.

Contact your local directors and thank them for their time and sacrifice for the profession. After all, they have practices and families too. Next, ask them about what the State Bar is doing and offer suggestions on what it can do better. To find your local directors, go to [texasbar.com/board](https://texasbar.com/board) and click on “Board Members.”

The governing structure of our mandatory, unified State Bar gives Texas lawyers the right to vote on the directors who represent us, the rules that regulate us, and the dues we pay for the right and privilege to practice law. Doctors and dentists don't have that right. Neither do architects or accountants. Just lawyers.

If the work of self-governance interests you, I invite you to consider running for a seat on the board. For information about running for a director position, go to [texasbar.com/districtdirector](https://texasbar.com/districtdirector).

Sincerely,

**TREY APFFEL**

Executive Director, State Bar of Texas  
Editor-in-Chief, *Texas Bar Journal*