

Report from EBA's Delegate to the ABA House of Delegates

By Susan A. Olenchuk

Did you know that the EBA has a voice in the policies of the American Bar Association through a seat in its House of Delegates? Twice a year EBA sends a delegate to HOD meetings which occur in conjunction with the ABA's mid-year and annual meetings. Here's an update on recent HOD activities from the ABA 2018 Annual Meeting that was convened in Chicago Illinois.

What is the HOD? Formed in 1936, the purpose of the HOD is to connect the ABA and state and local bar associations. The HOD establishes ABA policy with respect to both its administration and positions on professional and public issues. EBA is one of 27 affiliated organizations that has a delegate relationship with the ABA and in that role, attends all HOD meetings. EBA's bylaws provide for the appointment of EBA's delegate and that person serves in the HOD for a two-year term. Typically, the delegate is a former EBA president. During 2018-2019, EBA's delegate is Susan A. Olenchuk.

HOD August 2018 Meeting. The HOD met in Chicago in early August as a part of the ABA's 2018 Annual Meeting. The HOD met for two days and heard discussion and voted on resolutions that cover a wide range of issues affecting the legal profession and public policy.

While none of the resolutions had specific impacts for EBA, one resolution will affect EBA members who also are members of the ABA. The HOD adopted a new membership model that simplifies the ABA's dues structure by reducing the number of pricing tiers from over 150 to less than 10. The new model also will provide increased value to the ABA's members by, among other things, improving member access to free online and on-demand programming. More information regarding the new membership model and ABA member benefits can be found on the ABA's newly designed website (www.aba.com).

The August 2018 HOD meeting also featured remarks of ABA leadership, in particular, outgoing president Ms. Hilarie Bass. Highlighting one of the ABA's guiding principles of upholding the rule of law, Ms. Bass described the involvement of ABA attorneys in providing *pro bono* counseling to migrants seeking asylum and family reunification to ensure that the rights of these populations are respected. She also noted other ABA initiatives, including providing *pro bono* assistance to homeless youth in both the United States and abroad; developing recommendations to facilitate long-term legal careers for women; aligning licensing and bar admissions exams with modern legal competencies; addressing attorney impairment; and fighting the criminalization of poverty.

In addition to Ms. Bass, Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel addressed the HOD, addressing the importance of the rule of law in ensuring the rights of immigrants and the role of Chicago in welcoming cultural and ethnic diversity.

The HOD will next meet during the ABA's 2019 Mid-Year Meeting to be convened in Las Vegas, Nevada, in January 2019.

EBA's participation in the ABA House of Delegates gives EBA an valued first-hand seat in the making of ABA policy. EBA's participation also enables it to connect with other organizations in Washington D.C. who send delegates to the HOD and to stay apprised of developments affecting the legal profession. Thank you for the opportunity to serve as EBA's delegate to the ABA House Delegates.