

MBA NEWS



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MASSACHUSETTS BAR ASSOCIATION SUPPORTS SWEEPING REFORM OF STATE PROBATE SYSTEM

BOSTON, Mass. —Massachusetts Bar Association President David W. White Jr. testified in favor of bills that would overhaul the commonwealth's archaic probate system before the Joint Committee on the Judiciary at the Statehouse last week.

If passed into law, Senate bill 843 and House bill 1652 would update probate and trust law. The Massachusetts Uniform Probate Code would increase uniformity with other states, add protections for those under guardianship and ease the administration of probate matters for judges and court personnel.

"The proposed code will benefit consumers by reducing probate expense and delay. It will modernize the law, bringing it into the 21st century from some of its still-existing colonial roots and procedures," White testified before the committee on Thursday, Jan. 24.

"This legislation is widely supported and will simplify probate and trust administration, benefiting citizens throughout the commonwealth. We are ready to assist the committee in every way to help pass these bills," White added.

The Massachusetts Uniform Probate Code is the product of a comprehensive study and review of the state's laws by the MBA and the Boston Bar Association, whose president, Anthony Doniger, testified with White at the Statehouse. The MBA's House of Delegates approved the Uniform Probate Code 10 years ago.

Nearly two dozen panelists hosted by the MBA and BBA testified before the committee:

- **Thomas J. Carey Jr., Esq.**, *Adjunct Faculty, Boston College Law School, Boston*
- **John J. Ford, Esq.**, *Director, Elder Law Project at Neighborhood Legal Services, Lynn; President, Board of Directors, Massachusetts Guardianship Association*
- **Wynn Gerhard, Esq.**, *Managing Attorney, Greater Boston Legal Services, Boston*
- **Sandy Hovey**, *Supervisor of Elder Protective Services, ETHOS, Jamaica Plain*
- **Jennifer Laucirica, Esq.**, *Cushing & Dolan PC, Boston*
- **Mark A. Leahy, Esq.**, *Whittum & Leahy, Quincy*
- **Dr. Jennifer Moye, Ph.D.**, *Director, Geriatric Mental Health Clinic, VA Boston; Assistant Professor, Harvard Medical School.*
- **Frederick L. Nagle Jr., Esq.**, *Haverhill*
- **Al Norman**, *Executive Director, Mass Home Care, Burlington*
- **Emily Shea**, *Executive Director, Boston Partnership for Older Adults, Dorchester*
- **Hon. James Wade (Ret.)**, *Probate Court, Denver, Colo.*
- **Hon. Herbert Wilkins (Ret.)**, *Supreme Judicial Court, Boston*

Incorporated in 1911, the Massachusetts Bar Association is a non-profit organization that serves the legal profession and the public by promoting the administration of justice, legal education, professional excellence and respect for the law. The MBA represents a diverse group of attorneys, judges and legal professionals across the commonwealth.