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Robin S. Moselle

Times They Are A Changing

I followed my father into the law. My dad, now retired, focused a good part of his practice in the area of collections. While I was growing up, he was the only attorney in Broward County who did this type of work. There was only one attorney in Dade County, one in Palm Beach County, and very few other attorneys in Florida practicing in this area. These attorneys did not practice beyond these lines as there was enough work keeping them busy in their respective county.

By the time I joined my father in his practice, we were covering the tri-county area, and when I moved my firm to its current home, we were practicing throughout the state. Part of the reason for our expansion was based on technology; courtrooms and judges' chambers were now equipped to allow telephonic hearings, and it became possible to fax (and later e-mail) documents with ease. But a good portion of our expansion was attributed to necessity. Our field of law was becoming crowded with attorneys offering to do the same work at a lower fee. Clients were looking for one firm they could engage on a state-wide basis.

What happened in my little cosmos of the world is happening to attorneys on a global basis. Times are changing. Not only is the piece of the pie getting smaller, the number of people unable to afford legal representation is growing. To complicate matters, consumers can now look online for legal forms, legal advice and how-to for court appearances. Clients are looking for law firms who can represent them on a global basis, and on a low or flat fee.

The Florida Bar, under then President Eugene Pettis, formed Vision 2016 in order to address the myriad of emerging issues and to "prepare today's lawyer for tomorrow's practice." As part of its analysis, a Vision 2016 subgroup recently recommended allowing admission to out of state attorneys by motion through reciprocity. The attorney seeking admission would have to show that they are in good standing in their state and meet other qualifications, but would not have to take the Florida Bar Exam or have to show through any other means that they have a command of Florida law.

Your Broward County Bar Association Board of Directors has studied this proposal and do not feel that it is in the best interest of the public or attorneys in Florida. The Board of Directors has sent a letter to the Florida Bar expressing this opinion. A copy of the letter can be found in this issue of the Barrister on page 8. While we believe strongly that this proposal is replete with issues problematic to the practice of law in Florida, we understand that there may be BCBA members who are not in agreement with our views. We encourage you to express your position, either for or against the proposal, at VisionBarAdmissions@flabar.org. We also invite you to share your thoughts with us at <https://www.browardbar.org/contact/>. **B**