

**STATE BAR OF MICHIGAN
2007-2008 ANNUAL REPORT
STANDING COMMITTEE
May 2008**

Committee Name: Standing Committee on Unauthorized Practice of Law

Jurisdictional Statement:

Jurisdiction: Shall investigate matters involving the alleged unauthorized practice of the law and, in accordance with applicable Rules of the Supreme Court of Michigan and with the authority of the Board of Commissioners, shall file and prosecute actions seeking to enjoin those engaged in unauthorized practice, and shall cooperate with local bar associations. The Committee shall also propose and implement measures to educate the public and the legal profession about unauthorized practice of law issues, and shall provide comment and analysis to the Board of Commissioners upon request of the Board.

Officers and Membership:

William J. Ard, Chair

Members:

Thomas S. Bridges (resigned)
Elizabeth Luckenbach Brown
Christopher M. Brown
Alfredo Casab
Thomas J. Cory
Kim Warren Eddie
Stephen J. Gobbo
Christopher G. Hastings
Ellen Sugrue Hyman

David J. Klippert
Melissa F. Miller Manela
Major Michael D. Murray
Thomas J. Murray, Jr.
Meghan Kennedy Riordan
Ramon F. Rolf, Jr.
Mark Stuart (resigned)
Dennis M. Taubitz
Jonathan N. Wayman

Commissioner Liaison:

Kiffi Y. Ford

Staff Liaison :

Catherine O'Connell

2007-08 Meeting Schedule:

October 15, 2007 - State Bar of Michigan

February 10, 2008 - State Bar of Michigan

June 16, 2008- State Bar of Michigan (postponed – future date to be determined)

Resources Provided by the State Bar of Michigan in Support of Committee Work:

Staff support, telephone conferencing and printing educational materials

Committee Activities:

The committee continued its work in prevention and remediation of the unauthorized practice of law. Recent prevention activities have concentrated on the preparation of brochures intended for the general public and other licensed professionals in specific areas explaining the value added by the participation of qualified attorneys and the risk of harm

caused by unqualified providers. The first areas targeted are real estate, immigration, and probate and estate planning. The committee chair has also been involved in developing material to help administrators of libraries, senior centers, and similar facilities to determine whether an “educational program” is really a cover for sales of unauthorized services. Many victims of UPL were recruited through such programs. Former chair John Anding and committee members Kim Warren Eddie, Steve Gobbo, and Josh Ard presented a description of UPL activities to the Representative Assembly in September. In April, Steve Gobbo presented a proposal that the Representative Assembly adopted to provide resources to continue the preventive, educational mission. Josh Ard gave an overview of current UPL challenges and successes, following the State of the Judiciary speech by Chief Justice Taylor, where UPL was one of his topics. Litigation efforts have continued. One injunction was obtained in Kent County Circuit Court and litigation is continued in other cases. The committee wishes to thank former Bar staff members Catherine O’Connell and Victoria Kremski, who worked closely on UPL matters. The Bar expects to hire replacements soon. The committee has also been investigating proposals for changes in statutes and court rules that would facilitate the goal of protecting the public from the unauthorized practice of law. No consensus has yet been reached.

Future Goals and Activities:

Expand educational activities, taking a more creative, pro-active, public educational role in addressing the unauthorized practice of law. Continue working with the SBM Governmental Relations department to identify any appropriate legislative and other legal remedies.

Chair/Co-Chair Contact Information:

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