

# Chicago Daily Law Bulletin®

Volume 161, No. 59

## For sole practitioners, a new method of support

**R**ecent statistics suggest roughly half of all Illinois attorneys are self-employed. Although national, state and local bar groups maintain sections that support sole practitioners, there is no bar association devoted exclusively to promoting the interests of this ever-increasing segment.

That is based in part on our tendency toward self-reliance. We already manage all aspects of our practices, from top to bottom. We can do it all.

So why collaborate with others, beyond the necessary? And even if we wanted to be more collegial, we don't have much time. Our work keeps us busy.

The fact is, practicing law is more challenging now than ever. Technology can be the solo's friend — electronic filing and online research, for instance — but the changes keep coming, faster and faster. Blink too long, and you miss a new development.

There has been little chance for sole practitioners across the state to come together as a group, compare notes, keep current and generally kick around ideas and solutions to common problems.

Until now.

The Sole Practitioners Bar Association of Illinois was formed to support solos who want to collaborate with colleagues while retaining their independence.

Thanks to the digital age, the

### SOLE SPEAK

#### GLENN E. HEILIZER



*Glenn E. Heilizer of Heilizer Law Offices is a veteran litigator and sole practitioner based in Chicago. He handles commercial disputes in the federal, state and appellate courts in Illinois and Wisconsin. He welcomes all comments and may be reached at [glenn@heilizer.com](mailto:glenn@heilizer.com).*

association uses an efficient, online-based platform to promote the free flow of information among members. Membership is free and available to all Illinois-licensed attorneys. The website is located at [ilsolobar.org](http://ilsolobar.org).

*Down the road, we hope to attract enough members to speak with a unified voice on regulatory and rule-making issues affecting solos in Illinois.*

Through the association's website, members can read up on starting a small firm, get marketing advice or monitor trending legal issues. We further anticipate addressing more day-to-day matters, such as discussions on min-

imizing overhead, hosting a marketplace for sharing office space, assistance with calendar conflicts and the like.

And, of course, the ever-present succession planning is a topic of conversation.

Going forward, the success of this upstart group depends on you. This is a work in progress. We need participants to be actively involved. Members can post their own articles, comment on existing content and interact with other solos. So if you join, bring your keyboard.

Down the road, we hope to attract enough members to speak with a unified voice on regulatory and rule-making issues affecting solos in Illinois. Legal licensing and court requirements are fluid. We should participate in the process, consistent with our mission, like other bar associations. Being small should not equate with being left out.

In researching sole-practice issues for this column, I have crossed paths with judges, regulators, support groups and representatives from public-interest organizations. More than anything else, I am told we "need to get the word out" to solos on various important topics.

The Sole Practitioners Bar Association, which I founded, was formed for this reason. Please join, check it out and help get the word out. Let's see if there really is strength in numbers.