

IMPROVING THE LAW

Background

A principal purpose of The Missouri Bar, as set out in the Preamble to Supreme Court Rule 7, is to “improve . . . the law” The various committees of The Missouri Bar and the Board of Governors regularly consider statutory changes that will improve the law and its administration.

Missouri Bar Activities

The Missouri Bar has a very limited scope of legislative interest, as discussed in more detail in the section of this handbook dealing with legislative activities. However, a very significant purpose of the various committees of The Missouri Bar is to review the Revised Statutes of the State of Missouri. Members of our committees contribute to improving the law by providing factual information and insight into the operation of the administration of justice and, on occasion, advocating change.

The most prolific committee of The Missouri Bar in terms of improving the law has been our Probate & Trust Law Committee. Over many decades, that committee has regularly proposed changes in the statutory laws that improve the administration of justice in this area. Probate and trust law is complex and must be dynamic in order to meet the changing needs of the public.

Another very important part of the civil justice system is tort law. The Missouri Bar’s Tort Law Committee and various special committees and commissions over the years that have reviewed aspects of the tort system have been very helpful to the political interests considering changes to our tort system. During the 2005 legislative session, significant changes to the tort system were made. As has always been the case, The Missouri Bar served as a source of factual and unbiased information to those with the authority and responsibility to enact statutory provisions related to this part of our legal system. Nevertheless, many of the considerations undertaken by the legislative and executive branches are beyond The Missouri Bar’s ability to advocate because of the varying views of our members.

The law as it relates to children in Missouri is another special area of interest and concern. The Missouri Bar’s Commission on Children and the Law, our Family Law Section and our Juvenile Law & Courts Committee, along with various special committees, have traditionally had a keen interest in this important legal area. Legislation of all types intended to protect children has been considered a high priority for The Missouri Bar.

Lawyers throughout Missouri, and particularly those serving in the Missouri General Assembly, have the opportunity to significantly influence the development of the law. Any member of the bar with a perspective on the statutes of Missouri is urged to contact their elected representatives with comments and suggestions. Because of the relatively small number of lawyers serving in the Missouri General Assembly, lawyers who offer perspectives about the legal system are in an excellent position to influence the development of the law.