

Thank You for the Opportunity to Serve and for Your Trust and Support

James G. Vickaryous

Board of Governors Representative, 18th Judicial Circuit (2018–2026)

Dear Colleagues,

Thank you for your support throughout my eight years of service as your representative on the Board of Governors of the Florida Bar. The Bar dues have not increased, a promise I made when I ran in 2018. My goal was to represent the more than 2,400 lawyers of Brevard and Seminole Counties, and to advocate for the best interests of the 18th Circuit.

Several issues required special attention during my tenure. We were able to defeat a strong push to consolidate smaller circuits like ours into mega-circuits. Preserving our circuit's identity and local voice was critical, and together, we were successful. I am most proud of the Board's recommended changes to the IOTA program requiring banks to pay fair market interest on IOTA accounts. As a result, annual IOTA revenues grew from approximately \$10 million in FY2019 to more than \$260 million in FY2025, providing critical support to legal aid organizations throughout Florida. I am grateful to *The Florida Bar News* for publishing my monthly aspirational columns on practicing law, which became the book *Being A Lawyer*.

I remain firmly opposed to efforts allowing non-lawyers to share in legal fees. Protecting the independence and integrity of our profession is essential, and I am proud those efforts were ultimately defeated. I must warn you, though, that the proponents of non-lawyers owning law firms will continue their efforts.

While my time on the Board is coming to a close, my referral-based personal injury law practice continues full-time. Many of you have trusted me over the years with your clients, and I am truly grateful for your confidence. In an age of mega-firms and technological change, the lawyers of the 18th Circuit continue to demonstrate that attorneys can represent clients professionally and still be successful through collegiality, professionalism, and mutual support. I wish you continued success in the practice of law. We practice in the best circuit in Florida.

Serving you has been one of the most meaningful professional experiences of my career.

Warm regards,

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