

Q&A With the State Bar of Texas President-Elect

Media Mentions

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During the State Bar of Texas' annual meeting in Austin this week, Bracewell partner **W. Stephen Benesh** was sworn in as president-elect of the organization.

The Austin-based business litigator, who has spent his entire 36-year legal career with Bracewell, answered some questions from *The Lawbook* about what he hopes to accomplish during his tenure that will run from June 2024 until June 2025.

What inspired you to seek a leadership role in the State Bar of Texas?

I decided that it was the right time to put to good use the knowledge and experience I have gained over my many years of service to the legal profession. Over the course of my legal career, it has been my honor and pleasure to serve our profession in many capacities at the local and statewide level. These roles have given me a breadth of knowledge, experience and network of relationships that will enable me to lead our profession effectively and efficiently.

Have you learned any lessons from prior presidents of the state bar? If so, what are they and how will they inform your turn as the organization's leader?

I am president-elect today because of the encouragement and mentorship of 2004-05 State Bar President **Kelly Frels**, who has been my law partner for many years. Kelly taught me the importance of giving back a "tithe" of time and talents to the legal profession that has given so much to us, and he exemplified how to lead and serve with diligence, integrity and humility, which I hope to emulate.

What do you hope to accomplish during your tenure?

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Among other things, I would like to 1) facilitate the standardization of electronic filing across all counties in Texas; 2) create a docket assistance program within the Texas Lawyers Assistance Program, a pool of volunteer lawyers who can temporarily step into the breach in an attorney's practice when they have to step away to get the assistance they need; and 3) revamp the state bar's website to make it easier to access and use, including the addition of a searchable online database of common questions and answers about the bar that is accessible from the website's home page.

[Read more in *The Texas Lawbook*](#)