



Karen Adinolfi

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Your voices have been heard! Thank you to all of you who communicated with us and your state elected representatives about the issue of the elimination of the Business Income Deduction ("BID") for lawyers in the current Ohio budget bill. You'll recall that the Ohio General Assembly eliminated the BID (which allowed a business to avoid taxes on the first \$250,000 of its income annually and to pay a lower rate on the rest of the income) for lawyers and lobbyists, providing no explanation or justification as to why these two groups were singled out. The Ohio State Bar Association marshaled the support of bar associations around the state, including the Akron Bar Association, to lobby for the repeal of this provision. Numerous of our members expressed their support for the repeal, both to us and to their elected representatives. And it worked.

On October 10 the Ohio House of Representatives voted to repeal the provision and on October 23, the Ohio Senate followed suit. Governor Michael DeWine is expected to sign this provision into law. The new bill will allow businesses to take advantage of the BID as they had in the past (although businesses who claim it will have to provide some information about their occupation on their tax returns). Thank you for your efforts!

The Akron Bar Association's efforts to capitalize on additional monies for indigent defense afforded by the current Ohio budget bill continues. We are in the process of scheduling a

second meeting with Summit County to explore ways to move forward on this (keep in mind that Summit County Council must approve any increase in hourly rates or caps for appointed counsel), but your input and support is always welcome and appreciated. If you would like to be involved in the process or have any thoughts about this process, do not hesitate to let me know.

My columns thus far have concluded by spotlighting a new lawyer. I would like to deviate from that practice for this column and instead, say a few words about a beloved member of our legal community who left us far too soon, however insufficient those words will be. Anyone who practices in Summit County likely knows the name Brian Pierce, if not the man himself. Brian was an excellent criminal defense attorney (really, among the very best in the country) who dedicated his professional life to this legal community. He took on the least popular of clients and cases, and often espoused unpopular views when doing so, such as his committed opposition to the death penalty. However, it is no exaggeration to say that Brian was universally respected and loved among this legal community and his untimely death at the age of 51. Reading the tributes to Brian (from all corners of our profession and community) leaves one with a clear sense of a kind man, one devoted to family and friends, who was always quick with a joke or a comforting word, and whose commitment to his clients was un-

continued on next page...

wavering and unflinching. There is no doubt that he was passionately committed to his profession, to his clients, and to his fellow attorneys. He is irreplaceable, but that conclusion should not keep any of us from being inspired by and striving to emulate his skill, intellect, kindness, passion, dedication, and love for others. Let that be Brian's legacy for each of us.

Kenn D. Asch