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Texas Policy Stand-off

Proposed State Bar of Texas Policy Change Sparks Question about Transparency

A proposed policy change at the State Bar of Texas has sparked disagreement among its leadership: President-Elect Joe Longley called it an effort to erode transparency, while President Tom Vick said it would simply formalize existing practice. The policy, approved by the executive committee but still pending board approval, specifies that if bar officers or directors request records and the executive director decides to withhold them, the bar's board will decide whether to uphold that decision. The policy would apply to bar records not covered by the Texas Public Information Act. [Texas Lawyer](#) has more details on the proposed policy change and what Longley, Vick, and key bar staff members have to say about it.

A Big Deal: Avvo Bought by the Company Behind WebMD, Martindale-Hubbell

Whether they consider it a competitor, an ally, or a bit of both, many in the legal profession and in the organized bar have been keeping an eye on Avvo. The latest development: In a deal expected to close next month, Avvo will be sold to Internet Brands, which owns WebMD and operates a number of law-related websites, including Nolo and Martindale-Hubbell. Why does this purchase (whose price was not disclosed) make sense for both companies? and will Avvo's founder and CEO remain in that role? Find out at [Seattle Times](#).

New State Bar of Michigan Podcast Helps Lawyers Find Balance

Because being a lawyer is stressful, many bar associations are finding new ways to help their members lead a more balanced life. Last week, the State Bar of Michigan premiered a new podcast called "On Balance" on the [Legal Talk Network](#), with the goal of offering "useful and entertaining ideas on managing life as a lawyer." In the first installment, Executive Director Janet Welch introduces the podcast's two hosts and shares what led to its creation. The premiere podcast concludes with a sneak peak at some bonus content and the notable guests who will be featured.

Survey Gives a Nuanced View of Life for Recent Law Grads

When asked about their degree, their job-hunting experience, and whether law school turned out to be worth it, many JDs who graduated between 2009 and 2017 essentially said, "It's complicated." In a Gallup survey commissioned by the AccessLex Institute, only 44 percent of respondents who graduated with law degrees during the "Great Recession" said they had a "good job" waiting for them after graduation, and 26 percent said it took them more than a year to find a good job. However, 53 percent said they'd suggest law school for someone else. The study included adults who graduated with a bachelor's degree or higher in any field, between 1941 and 2017. How do the Great Recession JDs compare with those from prior years, and how do law grads compare with those in other fields? Learn more at [ABA Journal](#).

ABA Center for Innovation Fellows Program Now Open for Applications

You've probably heard of the ABA Center for Innovation, its fellows program, and some of the resulting projects that use technology to improve access to justice. If you or someone you know would like to be part of the next cohort of fellows, check out [the application](#), and note that the deadline is midnight Central time on Sunday, January 28. The fellowships are open to recent (past five years) law grads, who become NextGen Fellows, and to established professionals (no JD required), who become Innovation Fellows. Good luck!



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