

President's Message

by Hon. Gustavo A. Gelpí Jr.



On Labor and Employment Law

Labor and employment law cases take up a considerable percentage of every federal judge's civil docket. From my 12 years of experience on the bench, I can attest that litigating such cases requires extreme competence, devotion, knowledge of the applicable substantive, procedural and evidentiary law, and lots of preparation, both on plaintiff and defendant's sides. These cases also call for expertise at the administrative level—in many cases a jurisdictional prerequisite to coming to federal court.

The great majority of labor and employment cases that I've seen that surpass the summary judgment stage do settle before trial. This requires another important skill—being an effective advocate in settlement and mediation, as well as civility by all counsel. It also requires that district and magistrate judges employ effective mediation and settlement skills.

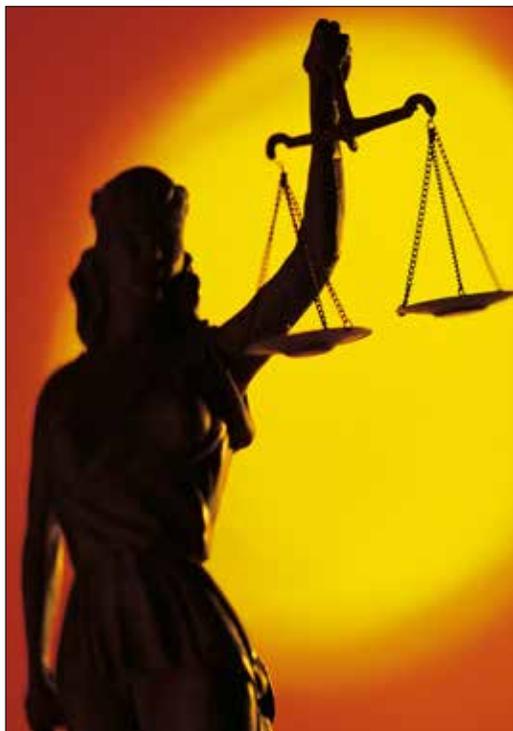
For our younger lawyers in particular, but also to any lawyer, the Federal Bar Association (FBA) is an ideal organization in which to learn the ins and outs of labor and employment law practice (as well as many other areas of federal law). During my years as an FBA leader, I have collaborated on several occasions in our superb Labor and Employment Law Section national

conferences, which provide an excellent learning opportunity. Likewise, at the chapter level I have participated in and attended many CLE and seminars on topics in this field. In addition, this publication over the years has included numerous educational articles on labor and employment law topics.

This issue itself is entirely dedicated to labor and employment law, so I hope that you peruse through its contents, no matter your level of experience or the fact that you do not practice in this area. Labor and employment cases seen by courts, from the district level to the Supreme Court, often influence important principles of evidentiary and procedural law.

I invite you to attend and participate in our many national and chapter events, not just Labor and Employment Law Section ones. They provide a great opportunity to network with practitioners from across the nation on both plaintiff and defense sides, to meet judges skilled in different areas of the law, and hence, learn in an environment that fosters competence and civility among all counsel who represent clients in the federal courts. ☉

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'G. Gelpí', written in a cursive style.



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