IMLA
THE MUNICIPAL LAWYER MAGAZINE

Raising the Bar

In the wake of what was arguably IMLA's most successful Mid-Year Seminar in many years, *Municipal Lawyer* brings to you one fragment of the excellent programming provided to our 400 attendees. The metes and bounds of constitutionally-protected religious expression continue to spark debate, particularly in the context of city council proceedings. We present two features on the subject--one by Ayesha Khan of the Potomac Law Group, who argued *Town of Greece* before the Supreme Court, and the other by Robert Higgason, Houston Senior Assistant City Attorney.

(While Denver's "International Church of Cannabis" opened its doors on 4/20, the same day our Mid-Year kicked off, we were not able to convene a panel analyzing the relationship between Hindu Kush and sincerely-held religious beliefs).

Our Mid-Year covered the broad spectrum of subjects confronting the local government attorney today, including employment, social media, environment, P3, cybersecurity, homelessness, telecommunications, municipal securities, driverless cars, crisis communication and much more. In particular, we devoted numerous sessions to the subject of qualified immunity and to the practices (both in the office and in the field), the trial techniques and the examination strategies which are most likely to protect municipalities and their employees. An upcoming issue of *ML* will focus on Section 1983.

And our Chief Legal Officer Forum brought together the top law officers from America's largest cities for an intensive look at issues most critical to their practices.

IMLA took the opportunity during the Mid-Year to honor the many amicus writers who contributed their time and outstanding appellate skills to advance the interests of our members nationwide. We bring you their names and faces on pages 18 and 19. It would simply be impossible to offer IMLA's highly-respected advocacy program without the dedication of these lawyers, and we are most appreciative.

Behind the scenes, IMLA continues to provide a network of resources for our members, including a recently-formed Sanctuary Cities group, an ever-more active listserv and an expanding webinar series bringing a wide swathe of practice topics to you. We will endeavor to host an even better program at our Annual Conference in Niagara Falls, Ontario this fall, and invite you to join us as we celebrate Canada's sesquicentennial--and only slightly less momentous, the retirement of our own Veronica Kleffner after more than three decades as the secret ingredient behind IMLA's success.

As always, we acknowledge the enthusiasm, ideas, acumen and contributions of our IMLA members across the country.

Best regards-

Erich Eiselt