

Dispute Resolution

“True, we [lawyers] build no bridges. We raise no towers. We construct no engines. We paint no pictures—unless as amateurs for our own principal amusement. There is little of all that we do which the eye of man and woman can see. But we smooth out difficulties; we relieve stress; we correct mistakes; we take up other men and women’s burdens and by our efforts we make possible the peaceful life of men and women in a peaceful state.”

- John W. Davis
Solicitor General of the United States
(1913-1918.)

Honorable Dennis J. Curran, Justice of the Massachusetts Superior Court (Ret.), has been a prime proponent of the use of (alternative) dispute resolution to avoid the expense and trauma of a court trial.

He chaired the Superior Court Committee on Alternative Dispute Resolution, and has presented at dozens of educational programs, including two presentations to delegates from Nigeria. He has long advocated the principle of “presumptive mediation” in our trial courts, in which before a trial is called, the parties are strongly encouraged, but not mandated, by a judge, to seek to resolve their conflict by mediation or arbitration. This judicial approach has dramatically reduced court case backlog.

Arbitrator. American Arbitration Association.

Within just the first six months of 2023, the AAA resolved 329,641 disputes.

Judicial Branch Committees on Dispute Resolution

- Chair, Committee on Alternative Dispute Resolution. Superior Court.
- Co-Chair, Committee on Specialized Courts. Boston Municipal Court Department.
- Superior Court Judicial Representative. Massachusetts Trial Court Standing Committee on Dispute Resolution.

Teaching Presentations on Dispute Resolution

- Massachusetts Bar Association - Dispute Resolution Section. Guest Speaker. September 20, 2016.
- Nigerian Judicial Delegation. Center for Peace, Democracy & Development. *“Alternative Dispute Resolution in Massachusetts: A View from the Bench.”* September 26, 2014.
- Boston Bar Association. House of Delegates. *“Presumptive Mediation.”* (January 16, 2014.)
- M.C.L.E. Fifth Annual New England Conference. *“ADR & The Law 2013.”* November 19, 2013.
- Nigerian Judicial Delegation. Center for Peace, Democracy & Development. *“Alternative Dispute Resolution in Massachusetts: A View from the Bench.”* (July 24, 2013).
- Massachusetts Bar Association. General Practice, Solo & Small Firms Conference. *“Negotiation, Mediation and Arbitration.”* (May 10, 2012).

- M.C.L.E. Third Annual New England Conference. “ADR & The Law- 2011.” (October 24, 2011).

Publications on Dispute Resolution

- Booklet for the Massachusetts Bar Association’s Dispute Resolution Section. September 20, 2016.
- “*Honest Abe and ADR.*” Curran, Dennis J. and Kingdon, Emma. *Massachusetts Law Review*. October, 2015.
- “*Abraham Lincoln, An Early Champion of ADR.*” *Massachusetts Lawyers’ Weekly*. Curran, Dennis J. and Kingdon, Emma. 42 MLW 647. December 2, 2013, page 39.
- “*Alternative Dispute Resolution in Massachusetts: A View from the Bench.*” Nigerian Judicial Delegation. Center for Peace, Democracy & Development. (July 24, 2013).
- “*Making Your Job Easier with ADR.*” Monograph. Massachusetts Bar Association. (October 4, 2012). .
- “*Negotiation, Mediation and Arbitration.*” Monograph. 2nd Annual Massachusetts Bar Association’s General Practice, Solo and Small Firm Symposium. (May 10, 2012).
- “*Report to the Chief Justice: Committee on Specialized Courts.*” Boston Municipal Court Department. (2005).

Bar Activities

- Member, Advisory Board. Dispute Resolution Section. Massachusetts Bar Association.

