



## Declaration of Candidacy

Candidates for election as Second Vice President or Director Elected Nationally must complete this form and submit it to the Executive Director at the principal headquarters of DRI by 5:00 PM (CDT) on July 1<sup>st</sup> of the year in which the election is held.

**National Director Requirements** - Directors Elected Nationally or by Region must be Individual Members of the Corporation admitted to the practice of law. Each such director must meet the following qualifications at the time of election: (a) The candidate shall have been a DRI member for a total of at least five (5) years, and (b) The candidate shall have been a member of at least one DRI substantive law committee for at least three (3) years, and (c) The candidate must have registered for and attended at least one (1) DRI Annual Meeting within the previous three (3) years, and, within the three (3) years prior to the final day of the Annual Meeting, the candidate must have 1) registered for and attended at least two (2) DRI seminars, or 2) registered for and attended one (1) DRI seminar and one (1) DRI Regional Meeting.

Position sought

Second Vice President\*     Secretary- Treasurer     National Director

\*If you have declared your candidacy for Second Vice President and are not the successful candidate, will you consider the Secretary - Treasurer Officer position?

Yes     No

Name Patrick J. Sweeney

Firm/Company Sweeney & Sheehan

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Born (location) Meadowbrook, Pennsylvania

Education Juris Doctorate, Widener University School of Law – Evening Division (1996)  
Bachelor of Science, Chemistry/Business, University of Scranton (1990)

Awards and achievements Pennsylvania Super Lawyer – Rising Star (2006-2008)

Areas of practice Transportation Law; Product Liability; Areas of General Liability and Insurance Coverage

Years as a defense attorney 22 years

Employment history Sweeney & Sheehan 2000 – Present  
State Farm Mutual Automobile Insurance Company 1992-2000

Noteworthy defense work

- Represent national lessor of vehicles in product liability litigation
- Defend national lessor of vehicles for claims of false imprisonment
- Represent major manufacturer of outdoor power equipment in product liability litigation
- Represent insurer in declaratory judgment action seeking to rescind a policy for a fleet of regional trucks due to fraud and misrepresentation at time of the application
- Represent a manufacturer of restaurant equipment in product liability litigation
- Serve as regional counsel representing a trucking company and its drivers
- Defend an insurer for claims involving breach of contract and bad faith

Professional affiliations Pennsylvania Defense Institute  
Philadelphia Association of Defense Counsel  
New Jersey Association of Defense Counsel  
International Association of Defense Counsel  
Transportation Lawyers Association

DRI member since 2001

**Please describe your previous involvement in DRI, including but not limited to, leadership positions held. Projects contributed to, Committee memberships, presentations given, and written materials authored. Special accomplishments should also be noted.**

I have been fortunate to serve in a leadership position in almost all of the key areas of the organization as well as my state defense organization. I have served as Chair of the Products and Technology (currently known as Cyber Security) Committees. I was a State Representative, Regional Director and a National Director. I have also served the organization as Annual

Meeting Chair and currently I am on the Law Institute. More specifically, I have served in all of the following leadership roles:

**Leadership Positions:**

- Law Institute (2018-2019)
- Annual Meeting Chair 2017
- Law Institute (2018-2019)
- DRI Board of Directors (2015 – 2018)
  - National Director
  - Chair, Governance Committee (2016 – 2018)
  - Vice Chair, Governance Committee (2015 – 2016)
  - Board Liaison, Drug and Medical Device (2015-2017)
  - Board Liaison, Trial Tactics (2017-2018)
  - Young Lawyers Task Force (2018)
- DRI Board of Directors (2006-2009)
  - Regional Director, DRI Board of Directors (2006-2009)
  - Board Liaison, Trial Tactics (2008-2009)
  - Board Liaison, Appellate Advocacy (2007-2008)
  - Membership, DRI Election Procedure Task Force (2009-2010)
  - Chair, DRI Governance Committee (2008-2009)
  - Vice Chair, DRI Governance Committee (2007-2008)
- Products Liability Committee
  - Committee Chair (2013-2015)
  - Committee Vice Chair (2011-2013)
  - Seminar Chair (2011)
  - SLG Coordinator (2008-2010)
  - Chair, Trial Tactics/Technology SLG (2006)
  - Vice Chair, Trial Tactics/Technology SLG (2005)
- Public Service Committee, Chair (2011-2012)
- Technology Committee
  - Committee Chair (2006)
  - Vice Chair (2005-2006)
  - Publications/Newsletter Subcommittee Chair (2004)

- Young Lawyers Committee
  - Service Project Subcommittee Chair (2004-2006)
  - Annual Meeting Liaison (2004)
- State Representative, Pennsylvania (2003-2006)
- DRI Annual Meeting State Marketing Liaison (2006-2007)
- Member Products Liability, Trucking, Trial Tactics, Retail and Hospitality and Diversity Committees

**Presentations:**

- “Becoming a Visionary Organization: DRI Style” – Pennsylvania Defense Institute (PDI) Annual Meeting 2018
- “Selection, Preparation and Implementation: Defending the Corporate Representative’s Deposition”, DRI Deposition Institute 2017
- “Lights, Camera and Action – the Dos and Don’ts and Hows of Preparing Witnesses for the Deposition Experience, Deposition Institute – 2015, 2016 & 2017
- “How to Turn a Possible Bet-the-Company Case into Favorable Settlement Through Early and Proactive Involvement”, Retail and Hospitality Seminar 2015
- “Strategies For Deposing Expert Witnesses”, Young Lawyers Seminar 2012
- “MCS-90: Where Are we Now”, DRI Annual Meeting Trucking Law Committee Meeting 2009
- “The Highs and Lows of The Past year – A Case Law Update”, Products Liability Seminar 2007
- “Navigating the Information Superhighway – What you Need to Know About E-Discovery” DRI Young Lawyer Seminar 2006
- “This Bytes: E-Discovery Demands in Today’s Practice”, YL Breakout Session Products Liability Seminar 2004
- “Writing the Small Print: Releases, Liens & Joint Tort Agreements”, YL Breakout Session Products Liability Seminar 2003

- “Discovery in the Electronic Age”, Technology SLG Session Products Liability Seminar 2002

**Articles:**

- Chapter on “The Corporate Attorney-Client Privilege”, Evidentiary Privileges For Corporate Counsel, Defense Library Series, 2008
- “Cost Shifting in the Electronic Age”, For the Defense, 2004

**Special Accomplishments:**

- Recipient, Richard H. Krochock Award, 2009
- Recipient, DRI Lifetime Community Service Award, 2005

The Community Service Award is a very special achievement for me. Shortly after the creation of the Service Project Subcommittee I was tasked with getting substantive law committees to complete service projects during their seminars. With the assistance of an amazing group of young lawyers I was able to get the Service Project Subcommittee to make significant strides with impacting local charities where seminars were taking place. While in Los Angeles for a Products Seminar the subcommittee partnered with LA Works, a non-profit volunteer agency for the greater Los Angeles area, and helped beautify an elementary school in a blighted neighborhood by painting a mural on the school’s exterior wall. Following the success of this program forty volunteers from a Young Lawyers’ seminar participated in a day of service at the Ronald McDonald House in Las Vegas. The project consisted of preparing lunches for single parents of children admitted to a local hospital, performing some much needed cleaning and maintenance at the home and an ice cream social and art project with children from the Nevada’s Children Center, an after-school program for children in foster care. We were able to build on the momentum from these programs and as a result DRI had an extremely successful service project at its Annual Meeting that year.

Receiving the Richard Krochock Award was also a very meaningful moment in my career. It represented an appreciation and recognition of the significant time and effort I have spent over the years mentoring younger lawyers.

**List any leadership roles in other defense organizations**

- Pennsylvania Defense Institute (PDI)
  - President (2012-2013)
  - President Elect (2011-2012)

- Long Range Planning Committee (2013 – 2016)
- Chair, Annual Meeting (2011)
- Executive Vice President (2010-2011)
- Vice President, East Region (2009-2010)
- Chair, Trucking Law Committee (2007-2009)
- Chair, Membership Committee (2003-2007)
- Chair, Young Lawyers Committee (2001-2003)

**Describe your goals if you are elected to the above position**

1. Increase the focus on providing skills based programming, leadership workshops and networking opportunities for the next generation of civil trial attorneys and practitioners. The organization is uniquely positioned to provide programming to teach our members how to become superior lawyers and exceptional leaders as well.
2. Develop a committee assessment tool to assess the current state of each substantive law committee and use the results of the assessment to create an individual plan for each committee to maximize their strengths, enhance membership engagement and DRI's brand.
3. Continue to nurture and develop the next generation of DRI members. The organization must continue to provide a platform for the young lawyers to thrive. To be successful at this endeavor DRI must seek the input from the young lawyers about the manner in which they want to receive their education and the specific networking structure they need to assist in growing their practice.
4. After participating in my state defense organization and witnessing the mutual benefit to the state organization and DRI from a strong relationship between the two, I will look to promote the continued development of the partnership between DRI and the state and local defense organizations.
5. Promote the continued development of resources and services for DRI's online footprint so the organization can continue to be the leader in online programming and offerings.

**What do you believe is the most important issue confronting the defense bar?**

There are many issues facing the defense bar including finding the proper work-family balance, the pressures placed upon the profession due to technological advances, the financial challenges encountered by clients and the underfunded court system. However, I believe the most pressing issue facing the defense bar is the continuing dilemma of the vanishing jury trial. Unfortunately, today's practitioners young and old are finding it extremely difficult to be an advocate in the court room. All too often counsel are asked to find alternative, more cost effective ways, to resolve pending cases or are instructed to resolve the case to avoid the continued expense of litigation. The net result may be a generation of defense attorneys which are incapable of trying a case when that resolution is what is needed.

## **Define the appropriate role for DRI as the national defense bar organization**

DRI is in a unique position to continue to be the leading advocate on behalf of the civil defense bar. The scope and breadth of the organization's structure allows it to be a thought leader and a driving force for making significant and positive changes. The Center for Law and Public Policy must continue its prominent role as an effective advocate for the defense bar on issues of national importance. An effective use of The Center to advocate the defense bar's position on constitutional issues, civil justice reform and substantive law concerns faced by our members will continue to raise the visibility and prominence of the organization as the collective voice of the defense bar.

The organization must continue the discussion and offer solutions to challenges encountered by clients and attorneys in today's judicial system. All too often cases are resolved in alternative dispute resolution due to the economic pressure of going to trial. DRI needs to try and address this imbalance and put the opportunity to decide cases back in the hands of the jurors.

DRI is in a very unique position to utilize its relationship with the state and local defense organizations (SLDO) to address legal trends at a grass roots level. DRI should continue to foster the relationship with every SLDO so a unified message can be sent on issues at the local and national level.

The organization needs to remain committed to diversifying its membership. Diverse cultural perspectives can inspire creativity and effectively solve problems. Members from different backgrounds bring a variety of experience and knowledge to the organization. This diversity fosters creativity from the collaboration of diverse experiences and perspectives which can inspire a broader range of solutions.

DRI has been the leader in enhancing the skills and effectiveness of defense lawyers for almost sixty years. The organization must continue to expand its educational programming to maintain its leadership role as the voice of the defense bar. The organization has the unparalleled resources to create and promote educational and networking opportunities for its diverse membership. Through the Law Institute the organization can continue to develop and execute programs that educate the membership on emerging legal trends and issues so it remains as the foremost legal organization for growth and development of its members.

### **Hobbies and/or interests:**

Running marathons and half marathons, coaching youth sports, including soccer, baseball and basketball

### **Family:**

I am married to Christina Sweeney and we have two children, Mary Kate, age 18, and Kevin, age 15.