

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 1st 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: **Sara M. Turner**

Firm/Company: **Baker, Donelson, Bearman, Caldwell & Berkowitz, PC**

Address: **420 20th Street North, Suite 1400**

Telephone: **205-250-8316**

Cell Phone: **205-249-6601**

E-mail: **smturner@bakerdonelson.com**

Born (location): **St. Louis, MO**

Education:

Augustana University, Sioux Falls, SD

University of Economics, Prague, CZ

University of Minnesota Law School, Minneapolis, MN

Awards and achievements:

Mid-South Super Lawyers (2016-2020)

Alabama Super Lawyers (2014-2015)

B-Metro Magazine "Top Flight Attorney" (2018)

B-Metro Magazine "Birmingham's Top Women Lawyers" (2016-2020)

Birmingham Business Journal "Top 40 Professionals Under 40" (2013)

Alabama Rising Stars, Personal Injury - Products: Defense (2011 – 2013)

Recognized as a "Client Service All Star" by BTI Consulting Group (2017)

Selected Non-DRI Publications and Presentations:

**"The Coronavirus Challenge: What Hospitality Businesses Should Consider Doing Now,"
republished April 7, 2020 in Hotel Business (March 13, 2020)**

"Hotel Brand Sex-Trafficking Litigation Update: Consolidation Denied" (February 2020)

**"Sharing the Mental Load: Tips and Tricks to Get Your Sanity Back," Women's Initiative
Newsletter (May 2018)**

"Is It Time to Take a Fresh Look at Your Parental Leave Policy?" (March 2016)

**Co-author – "Re-Examining the Learned Intermediary Doctrine: The Age-Old Theory Appears
Alive and Well," IADC Committee Newsletter (July 2015)**

"Litigation: Labeling lawsuit defenses," InsideCounsel.com (April 2013)

**"Litigation: What to know about the new 'Big Food' lawsuits," InsideCounsel (September
2012)**

"IP in Joint Ventures With Universities or Nonprofits," ACCDocket (September 2011)

**"Beyond Voir Dire: Extra Tools for Getting Inside the Mind of a Juror: Mock Trials, Jury
Consultants and More," CLE for Barristers Educational Services (December 2013)**

**"Law Firm Profitability," Tennessee Defense Lawyers Association 2011 Spring Seminar,
Sandestin Golf & Beach Resort, Florida (June 2011)**

**"Ethics: Tripartite Relationship," Cumberland Insurance Coverage Seminar, Cumberland
School of Law (December 2012)**

Areas of practice:

**Hospitality, Products Liability, Franchise, Drug and Medical Device, Personal Injury, CBD, Class
Action**

Years as a defense attorney: **17**

Employment history:

Larson King, St. Paul, MN (2003-2006)

Baker Donelson, Birmingham, AL (2006-present)

Noteworthy defense work:

National counsel for large franchisor in current human trafficking litigation.

National counsel for CBD manufacturer in false advertising class actions.

Successfully defended large hospitality corporation in complex litigation ongoing for more than a decade.

Obtained summary judgment for a franchisor in a vicarious liability case the morning of trial, successfully avoiding a \$4.5 million verdict which was awarded against the co-defendants.

Negotiated a favorable settlement for one of the nation's largest independently owned petroleum marketing companies in a complex commercial transaction involving biodiesel and other natural fuels.

Represented a large franchisor in a high dollar hospitality-related franchise dispute.

Obtained the dismissal of claims against a pharmaceutical company alleging personal injuries from the use of an antipsychotic prescription drug. The United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit dismissed the plaintiff's appeal, concluding it lacked an arguable basis in law or fact.

Represented a U.S.-based manufacturer in a lengthy international arbitration proceeding in Mexico City.

Successfully defended a products manufacturer in the accidental choking death of a three-year-old child.

Defended a catastrophic personal injury case involving a forklift manufacturer and a major trucking company.

Represented a fertilizer manufacturer in a commercial dispute involving major crop loss damages.

Defended various nursing homes in cases ranging from sexual abuse allegations to wrongful death matters.

Handled a number of toxic exposure cases acting as counsel for both chemical corporations and heavy machinery manufacturers.

Professional affiliations: DRI, International Association of Defense Counsel ABA, Minnesota Defense Lawyer's Association, Alabama Defense Lawyer's Association.

DRI member since: 2003

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.

Annual Meeting Steering Committee

Chair and Vice Chair Technology Committee

Chair and Vice Chair Retail and Hospitality Committee

Young Lawyers Seminar Chair, Vice Chair and Second Vice Chair

Young Lawyers Seminar - Speaker

Insurance Roundtable – Speaker and Steering Committee Member

Law Firm Profitability Seminar Vice Chair

Retail and Hospitality Seminar Chair

Retail and Hospitality Steering Committee

Trucking Steering Committee

Trucking Teleconference Subcommittee Chair

Hospitality Steering Committee

Young Lawyers Steering Committee

Products Liability Steering Committee

DRI For Life

Products Liability Committee – SLG Chair and Vice Chair Manufacturer’s Risk

Products Liability Committee – SLG Chair and Vice Chair Technology

Products Liability Committee - SLG Chair and Vice Chair Chemical and Toxic Tort

21st Century Lawyer Task Force

Strictly Automotive Seminar Steering Committee

Rainmaking Seminar – Speaker

Annual Meeting Liaison Data Management and Security Committee

Young Lawyer’s Steering Committee

Young Lawyer’s SLDO Subcommittee Chair

Young Lawyer’s Teleconference Subcommittee Chair

Young Lawyer’s Annual Meeting Subcommittee Chair

Substantive Liaison between the DRI Young Lawyers Committee and the DRI Trucking Law Committee

Committee Liaison between the DRI Young Lawyers Section and the Minnesota Defense Lawyers Association

DRI Social Networking Taskforce

DRI Civil Bar Roundtable Law School Advisory Committee

Trucking Seminar – Speaker

Products Liability Seminar – Speaker (on multiple occasions)

Selected Speaking and Publications:

"DRI For Life: Is it Time to Take A Fresh Look at your Parental Leave Policy?," For the Defense (March 2016)

"We Are All Becoming 'Techies'," For The Defense (January 2011)

"Working From Home, Homeschooling, and the issues Both Present," DRI podcast (May 2020)

"Managing Teams Remotely Part One of the Work from Home Series," DRI podcast (March 2020)

"Understanding the Reach of the 'Long Arm' of the Law," DRI's Retail and Hospitality Litigation and Claims Management Seminar (May 2013)

"Old Wine in a New Bottle: Successful Use of Social Media and Technology Tools to Generate New Business," DRI Rainmaking Seminar (March 2012)

"You've Been Invited to Be Someone's Friend: The Impact of Social Networking on the Attorney-Client Relationship," DRI Product Liability Conference, New Orleans, Louisiana (April 2011)

[Note: while I have tried to include as much as possible on this list, because of the number of years I have been involved I am certain that some things have been missed!]

List any leadership roles in other defense organizations.

Various leadership roles in IADC and as a spouse in FDCC including seminar planning and event hosting. Former Minnesota Defense Lawyers Products Liability Committee Chair, Former Minnesota Defense Lawyers New Lawyers Committee Chair

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

I believe that COVID-19 has fundamentally changed the practice of law and business as we knew it for many of our clients. As a result, my goals in applying to become a DRI National Director have changed as well. I think that DRI is more important than ever in this altered landscape. DRI has been such a fundamental part of my growth as a lawyer and as a person that I am passionate about seeing it continue to flourish even in a post-corona world. One of the most critical elements of DRI for me has been relationship building. I would like to see this aspect of DRI continue to be a major part of the organization, even if we cannot be together in person. One of my goals as National Director would be to ensure that networking among members and between members and clients continues to occur and even increase. I think creating new ways for those important relationships to be created and maintained is a critical part of what DRI represents. I have personally benefitted from having easy access to a network of trusted local counsel. Similarly, I have served as local counsel on numerous occasions for other members. Having those relationships has been a significant component and distinguisher for me both for clients and within my firm. As an example, I would continue to expand the offerings of structured networking opportunities for smaller groups of lawyers and clients looking to build their network online – wine tastings, cooking events, discussions groups related to specific hot topics, etc.

My second goal as National Director would be to offer programming and resources to allow defense lawyers to provide excellent client service. I think high quality education is a major component of that but there are also additional benefits that DRI does and can offer to improve our ability to serve our clients. At the end of the day, our members are looking for us to offer resources that they can use to make their client's lives easier and improve the level of service they are able to offer. I know that many clients seek out DRI member lawyers because they have a level of confidence in the resources we are able to provide and to which their counsel

will have access. As National Director my goal would be to continue to expand and improve upon resources that allow member lawyers to improve client service. As an example, providing information related to resources like the expert database, regular topical discussion groups, and compendiums on specific issues of law or other topics that can be used to improve the service we are able to offer our clients.

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

I believe that one important issue facing the defense bar today is profitability and is something that we cannot ignore in the current economic times. In the context of COVID-19, I think most law firms, lawyers, and clients are trying to find new ways to maintain profitability. DRI has always been a resource for lawyers to use in solving complex problems, and this problem is no different. I think continuing to ensure that our services add value is the most critical hurdle to staying relevant today, especially in these uncertain financial times. Firms will continue to look at expenses and DRI can and should be one that is considered necessary. Articulating the strong business case for DRI is easy and is something we should ensure is being effectively communicated to our current and future members.

While profitability is certainly important, the events of recent days have caused me to reflect on what I think is truly the most important issue facing not only the defense bar, but the legal system itself - racism and the need for diversity. There is no question that the defense bar traditionally lagged behind in this important area. DRI has been a leader in diversity for many years but even with our great work and strides in this area, I believe that we can and should do more. There are no easy answers or quick fixes, but continuing to place emphasis and focus on this important issue is key to our organization's future.

Define the appropriate role for DRI as the national defense bar organization.

DRI serves an important role not only in keeping defense lawyers educated and offering networking opportunities. As the national defense bar organization we provide a check on the American Association of Justice and the Plaintiffs' Bar that cannot be overstated. Without DRI, insurance companies and corporations would be left without a place for their lawyers to have the chance to discuss and prepare for strategies being created by the Plaintiffs' Bar. The need for DRI is one that quite literally ensures justice for defendants. Without DRI, the jury system as we know it would be transformed creating an unfair advantage for the Plaintiffs side.

Hobbies and/or interests:

When I am not spending time with my family, I enjoy running. I have a wonderful running group and have run everything from Ultras, Marathons, Half Marathons and beyond. Running keeps me sane and I love that so many of our kids have picked up the habit.

Family:

I have six children and a wonderful Husband. My Husband, Kile Turner, is also a DRI member and is a member of FDCC. We met through DRI Young Lawyers many years ago. Four of our children are in college and two are still at home, though in these times of corona, our house is full once again with kids home from college.
