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State Sen. Michael J. Rodrigues Receives Legislator of the Year Award from Mass. Bar Association

Senate Ways and Means Chair Honored for Championing Access to Justice Improvements

BOSTON, Mass. — The Massachusetts Bar Association (MBA) honored State Sen. Michael J. Rodrigues (D-First Bristol and Plymouth) with its Legislator of the Year Award at the sold-out MBA Annual Dinner on Thursday, May 2, at the Westin Boston Seaport District in Boston. The annual award recognizes state or federal legislators who have distinguished themselves in public service through outstanding contributions to the legal profession, courts and administration of justice.

“As the head of the Senate Ways and Means Committee, Chairman Rodrigues helped secure funding to improve courthouse technology, add additional judges for the Probate and Family Court, and increase the budget allocation for civil legal aid programs in Massachusetts,” said MBA Chief Legal Counsel and Chief Operating Officer Martin W. Healy. “The Massachusetts Bar Association is proud to honor Chairman Rodrigues for his leadership in championing critical court priorities that will improve access to justice in Massachusetts.”

As the state senator representing the First Bristol and Plymouth District, Rodrigues serves Fall River, Freetown, Lakeville, Rochester, Somerset, Swansea and Westport. He was elected to the Massachusetts State Senate in 2010 and was appointed chair of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means in February 2019, and presently serves in this capacity. Previously, he served as Senate majority whip, chair of the Senate Committee on Ethics, chair of the Joint Committee on Revenue, and chair of the Joint Committee on Children, Families, and Person with Disabilities.

Prior to being elected to the Senate, Rodrigues served 14 years in the House of Representatives, where he chaired the Joint Committee on Commerce and Labor, the Joint Committee on Labor and Workforce Development, and the Joint Committee on Consumer Protection and Professional Licensure.

Rodrigues graduated from the University of Massachusetts-Dartmouth with a Bachelor of Science in accounting. He has been the recipient of numerous awards from a variety of local charitable organizations and nonprofit advocacy groups. He was also recognized by the president of Portugal in 2010 with the Medal of Prince Henry the Navigator, which is the highest honor bestowed upon noncitizens of Portugal. Rodrigues is also president and treasurer of ABC Floor Covering in Westport. He resides in Westport with his wife Patti and enjoys spending time with his two adult children and grandchildren.

In addition to the presentation of the Legislator of the Year Award, the 2024 MBA Annual Dinner featured a keynote address by Sean K. Ellis, director of the Exoneree Network of the New England Innocence Project, and the presentation of the President's Award to Massachusetts Probate & Family Court Judge Angela M. Ordoñez, the Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr. Scholarship to Suffolk University Law School student Johanna Merlos, and the Outstanding Young Lawyer Award to Mariana Medeiros of Sobosik Law in Medford.

Incorporated in 1911, the Massachusetts Bar Association is a non-profit organization that serves the legal profession and the public by promoting the administration of justice, legal education, professional excellence and respect for the law. The MBA represents a diverse group of attorneys, judges and legal professionals across the commonwealth.