

# Connecticut LAWYER

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## A New Home for the Appellate Court

Who Can Take  
What Post-Kelo

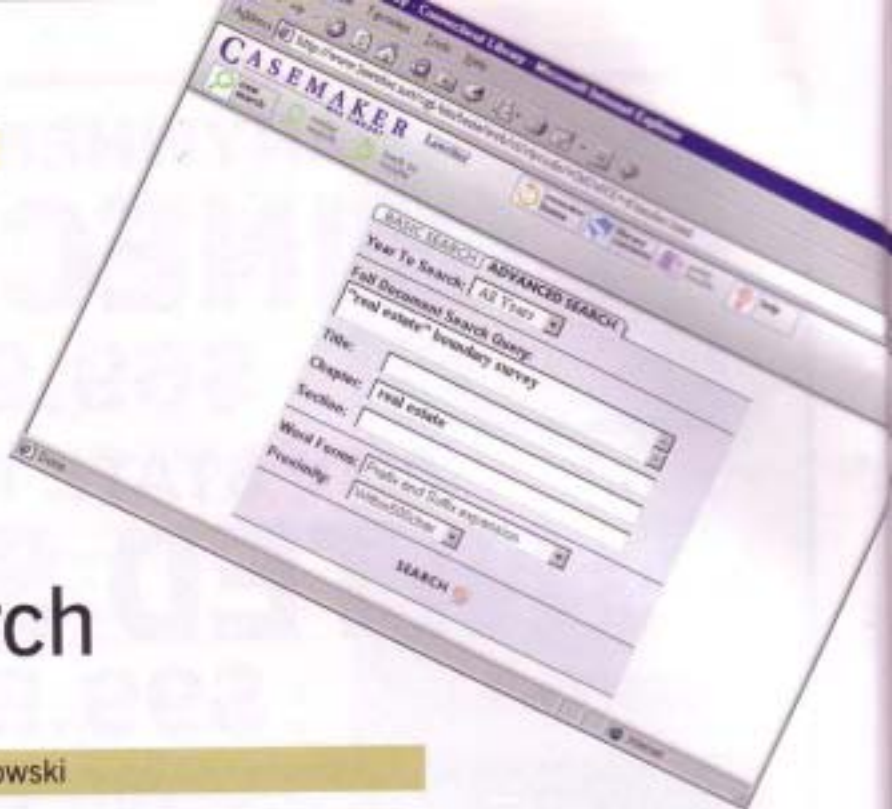
Benefits and Deficits  
of Civil Union Law

Casemaker®—Still #1  
Member Benefit



# Casemaker<sup>®</sup>: Taking the “Search” Out of Legal Research

By Jaclyn M. Falkowski



Two legal clients, a driver and a passenger, were involved in an automobile accident with an uninsured motorist. The clients' liability limits were \$100,000/\$300,000, but their attorney, Robert Sciglimpaglia, noticed that their uninsured/underinsured coverage was only \$20,000/\$40,000. Sciglimpaglia knew that there was a Connecticut statute stating that the sum coverage must be equal to the liability, but he could not remember what the statute number was.

Sciglimpaglia turned to Casemaker, the online, legal research library provided to all CBA members.

Through Casemaker, he was able to quickly and easily find the statute, C.G.S. § 38a-336, stating that the coverage must be equal unless the insured gives informed, signed consent. The clients said they did not remember signing a form, and Sciglimpaglia then approached the insurance company.

"We will see what the result of this turns out to be," he said. "But without Casemaker helping me to find the statute, I would be completely out of luck."

When you need reliable information and don't have time to dig through books and binders, when fast-approaching deadlines require almost instantaneous results, when your case demands quick and accurate turnaround, when you've investigated other avenues only to be disappointed at the qual-

ity of a search or the response offered to you—where can you turn?

Why not try Casemaker?

## What Is Casemaker?

On October 1, 2001, the Connecticut Bar Association became the fourth bar association in the United States to offer Casemaker, a fully searchable, online, legal research library available around the clock with unlimited access to all members. Casemaker features a comprehensive collection of historic-to-current state and federal case law, statutes, codes, regulations, and a wealth of other materials.

"Quick, accurate, and comprehensive...that's how I've found Casemaker," said Attorney William Dworski, who likes the program's convenience when he is searching for points of law.

"Often I need a case file," he explained, "and I find that Casemaker is extremely helpful."

Powered by Lawriter, Inc., of Cincinnati, Ohio, the system is marketed only to bar associations. The CBA offers Casemaker as a free service to its members, who have instant access—without any per-minute, per-hour, or monthly charges—to case law from all of the states that have entered the Casemaker consortium as well as federal law.

To date, twenty-two other states have joined, including Alabama, Colorado, Georgia, Idaho, Indiana, Maine,

Massachusetts, Michigan, Mississippi, Nebraska, New Hampshire, North Carolina, Ohio, Oregon, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Texas, Utah, Vermont, Washington, West Virginia, and, most recently, Kentucky. The ultimate goal is for the remainder of the fifty states to enter the consortium, creating a vast resource for legal practitioners in Connecticut and across the country.

## What Can Casemaker Offer You?

Whether you're a solo practitioner or a member of a large firm, whether you practice in the federal courts or in your local area, or whether you work in Hartford or Fairfield County, Casemaker has the potential to work for you.

"I like Casemaker because it has all of the relevant Connecticut cases, statutes, regulations, Practice Book sections, and the Connecticut workers' compensation opinions," said Sciglimpaglia. "You can research from any computer that has access to the Internet through the CBA Web site—no need to carry a special password or username with you like other online research services."

CBA members need only to log into the association Web site, [www.ctbar.org](http://www.ctbar.org), to access Casemaker. Simply enter your mem-



ber login ID and password to access the members-only portions of the site. (Can't log into the library? See, "Having Problems Accessing Casemaker?")

The Connecticut library features back articles from the *Connecticut Bar Journal*, the CBA's scholarly periodical, and *Connecticut Lawyer* magazine; Ethics Opinions as presented by the CBA's Committee on Professional Ethics; unreported superior court decisions; the Connecticut Rules of Professional Conduct; Connecticut Freedom of Information

small-business law and often uses Casemaker in her practice to find cases without having to search for hard copies.

"The thing that I love about Casemaker is the ethics opinions—formal and informal," said Chief Disciplinary Counsel Mark Dubois, adjunct professor of legal research and writing at the University of Connecticut School of Law, who sometimes runs across references to CBA Ethics Opinions during his own research. "I don't think there's anyplace else to find those opinions electronically."

involved in a divorce matter that required the filing of an innocent spouse tax relief claim and a substantive brief as to whether certain evidence was admissible under law. Using Casemaker, supplemented by computer research at her local law library, Hawley was able to efficiently research the brief and was successful in persuading the court to admit the evidence.

"At no time did I feel a deficit because I was not using a more expensive service," said Hawley, who uses Casemaker every day. "I am able to keep my expenses down for my clients because of the low cost of using Casemaker. I pass this benefit directly to my clients. The occasions that I travel to the local law library to supplement this research cannot compare to the cost savings of using Casemaker."

"Thank you for offering this online research library to your members," Hawley said. **CL**

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Commission decisions; and much more.

"The fact that all of this is included in the price of CBA dues is amazing!" said Sciglimpaglia.

Educators from Connecticut's law schools also find Casemaker helpful in the classroom.

Attorney Judy Gedge, an adjunct professor of business law at Quinnipiac University School of Law, often uses Casemaker to locate and print examples of Connecticut case law to pass out to her students. She noted that Casemaker is a major reason why she continues her membership with the CBA.

"Casemaker is one of the biggest benefits of bar association membership," said Gedge, who is also a solo practitioner of

"It's a huge benefit," Dubois continued, "and provides easy access to useful information."

"It's terrific for membership," remarked CBA Past-President Fred Ury, "especially for smaller or more straight-forward practices that can use Casemaker instead of relying heavily on pricey, subscription-based search engines, cutting high costs and reducing overhead expenses."

"It's worth the \$250 for CBA membership," Ury added.

## How Can Casemaker Help Your Clients?

Shortly after opening her own practice in 2004, litigator Merrie Hawley became

*Jaclyn M. Falkowski is the editorial assistant for the CBA. She would like to thank the attorneys who contributed their experiences to this article.*

To learn more about Casemaker, how to use it, and how it can help your practice, visit [www.ctbar.org](http://www.ctbar.org), call the CBA Member Service Center at (860)223-4400, or register for the October 26, 2005, CLE seminar, "Unleashing the Power of Casemaker and Web-based Legal Research."

## Having Problems Accessing Casemaker?

Here are a few things you can check:

- Your CBA member status—If you have not paid your current year's CBA dues, you will not be able to access the members-only sections of the Web site, including Casemaker. You can pay your dues online at [www.ctbar.org](http://www.ctbar.org), or contact the CBA Member Service Center by phone.
- Your Web browser requirement—Check your Web browser version. Older browsers may not operate optimally. Refer to your browser's Help System/Information for upgrade information.
- Your Web browser configuration—Your browser must be set to accept cookies. If your browser is configured to deny cookies or to deny cookies from the CBA Web site, you

will not be able to access Casemaker or other members-only Web pages or receive member prices for online purchases and registrations. The cookie feature is enabled by default in most browsers.

- Your login ID and password—Be sure that you have correctly entered your CBA login and password. Remember that both are case sensitive. If you have forgotten your login or password, contact the CBA Member Service Center for assistance.

For additional help, refer to the Casemaker overview and user's manual at [www.ctbar.org](http://www.ctbar.org), or contact the CBA Member Service Center at (860)223-4400.