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## ALTA Board Member Appointed Chief Justice, Illinois Court of Claims

Illinois Gov. Bruce Rauner appointed Peter Birnbaum, president and CEO, Attorneys' Title Guaranty Fund, as chief justice of the Illinois Court of Claims, where Birnbaum has served as a judge since 2004.

The Illinois Court of Claims was established by the legislature in 1889 as a forum of limited jurisdiction to render decisions on monetary claims and lawsuits against the state. Birnbaum is one of seven judges on the court of claims. They are appointed by the governor with the advice and consent of the Illinois Senate.

"I am honored to be chosen by Governor Rauner to lead the court, and I welcome the challenges and responsibility that go with the role of chief justice," said Birnbaum, who is a member of ALTA's Board of Governors and serves as its treasurer. "It is a privilege to serve on a court that plays an integral role in determining the rights and responsibilities the state and its citizens.

During his tenure, Birnbaum has provided leadership for the court in cases involving soldiers killed in the line of duty. He also has authored several significant opinions including *Dorsey v. State*, a case involving a state trooper who killed two young girls while he was texting and driving at reckless speeds.

In October 2014, the Illinois Bar Foundation (IBF), the charitable arm of the Illinois State Bar Association, presented its 16th Annual Distinguished Award for Excellence to Birnbaum. In 2011, he was inducted as a laureate in the Academy of Illinois Lawyers, the highest honor bestowed by the Illinois State Bar Association, for his lifetime of service to the public and the profession.

A past president of the alumni board and current member of the board of overseers for the Chicago-Kent College of Law, Birnbaum was honored with a Distinguished Service Award from the college in 2004. In 2013, he was named one of the college's 125 Alumni of Distinction over its 125-year history for his outstanding professional and community service achievements.

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