

Prominent Automotive Industry Practice Group Joins Arent Fox

Six Los Angeles Attorneys from Venable Make the Move to Arent Fox's Automotive Practice

WASHINGTON and **LOS ANGELES** — **FEBRUARY 19, 2010** — Arent Fox LLP announced today that six attorneys are joining the firm's automotive practice. **Aaron H. Jacoby**, **John D. Bronstein**, and **Richard D. Buckley, Jr.** join Arent Fox as partners. **Kenneth Murphy** joins as counsel. Rounding out the new team are associates **Victor P. Danhi** and **Melanie S. Joo**. The attorneys held the same positions at their former firm, Venable LLP. All six lawyers will be resident in the firm's Los Angeles office.

Mr. Jacoby, who served as chair of Venable's automotive industry group, will co-chair the Arent Fox automotive practice, along with **Christopher H. Grigorian**, who resides at the Arent Fox office in Washington, DC.

"Aaron, John, Richard and Ken are extraordinarily talented attorneys, each possessing a tremendous amount of legal experience in the automotive industry and related fields," said Arent Fox Chairman **Marc Fleischaker**.

"The team is widely respected for their extensive work representing automotive dealerships and automotive dealer groups in virtually all aspects of the business. Their experience and knowledge in this area of the automotive industry is a perfect complement to Arent Fox's existing automotive practice, which is nationally known for its focus on representing manufacturers and suppliers as well as dealerships," Fleischaker said. He noted Arent Fox led the national lobbying effort on behalf of a coalition of automobile dealers in convincing Congress to enact an arbitration process to address General Motors and Chrysler's decision to close more than 2000 dealerships across the country. Arent Fox's efforts were selected as one of the "Top 10 Lobbying Triumphs" of 2009 by *The Hill* newspaper.

"The automotive industry is in rapid transformation, as alternative technologies and new dealer distribution networks are emerging," Fleischaker said. "We are well positioned to assist our clients in meeting the resulting challenges in the regulatory, finance and transactional arenas."

Mr. Jacoby, who was recognized by the *Daily Journal* as one of California's Top 100 Lawyers for 2009, said, "We are very enthused and proud to be joining Arent Fox, one of the premier law firms in the nation, and helping launch this major expansion of the firm's automotive practice to the West Coast. Arent Fox is one of the most dynamic firms in Los Angeles. And with its offices in Washington, DC, and New York City, we are joining a national team of distinguished and seasoned attorneys that will strengthen our ability to help our clients address the extraordinarily complex legal issues and challenges facing the automotive industry today."

At Arent Fox, the team will continue to focus on consumer class actions, unfair competition and franchise litigation, counseling automotive industry clients in federal and state regulatory matters, and defending government investigations. The transactional team will continue to focus on acquisition and development of dealership facilities, structured financing, business entity formation and business planning, regulatory compliance, franchise and customer relations and disputes.

Arent Fox Continues Major Expansion in Los Angeles

The arrival of the new automotive practice team is the latest development in the rapid growth of Arent Fox in Los Angeles. Led by managing partner **Robert C. O'Brien**, the Los Angeles office has grown from nine lawyers when it opened in January 2007 to more than 40 attorneys – including lateral partners and new associates – and over 30 staff members.

In December 2007, Arent Fox Los Angeles relocated to the city's prestigious Gas Company Tower located at 555 West 5th Street, leasing more than triple the office space occupied by the firm at its former address.

"Aaron, John, Richard, Ken and the entire automotive practice group are great additions to our firm," Mr. O'Brien said. "Their experience bolsters and deepens our automotive and litigation practices at a time that businesses here in California and across the country are seeking pragmatic solutions to increasingly difficult financial and legal challenges."

About the Attorneys

Aaron H. Jacoby, Partner: Mr. Jacoby's practice focuses on class actions and consumer litigation, unfair competition, defending government investigations, and federal and state regulatory matters affecting the automotive industry. He represents many of the automotive industry's key players in litigation and business matters nationally. He speaks and writes frequently on automotive industry issues, serving as counsel to several industry associations. In 2009, Mr. Jacoby was recognized in the *Daily Journal's* Top 100 Lawyers in California.

Mr. Jacoby graduated from the University of San Francisco School of Law and earned his undergraduate degree from the University of California at Santa Cruz.

John D. Bronstein, Partner: Mr. Bronstein focuses his practice on counseling automotive, commercial trucking and transportation clients in federal and state regulatory matters, defense against personal injury and consumer litigation, and government investigations. Mr. Bronstein has more than 20 years of legal experience providing strategic counsel to automotive dealership groups, trucking companies, and related entities on wide variety of matters, including compliance with federal and state regulations, operational issues and litigation avoidance.

Mr. Bronstein earned his JD degree from Loyola Marymount University after obtaining his BA at UCLA.

Richard D. Buckley, Partner: Mr. Buckley focuses his practice on business litigation, including class actions, with an emphasis on the automotive and entertainment industries. He was selected for inclusion in 2009 *Southern California Super Lawyers Rising Stars* edition.

Mr. Buckley earned his JD degree from the University of Tulsa College of Law, where he served as the Notes and Comments Editor at the *Tulsa Law Journal*. He graduated *magna cum laude* from the University of Southern California, earning a BA degree.

Kenneth J. Murphy, Counsel: Mr. Murphy's practice encompasses a vast array of sectors within the automotive industry, including business entity formation, structured financing, acquisition and development of dealership facilities, business planning, regulatory compliance, franchise and customer relations and disputes, and purchase and sale of dealerships. He served as special counsel for a new business regarding e-commerce issues related to the automobile distribution system, including development of a national compliance plan for

conducting new vehicle purchase and lease transactions on a national basis in compliance with laws of multiple jurisdictions.

Mr. Murphy is a graduate of the University of Southern California School of Law. He earned his undergraduate degree from the University of Santa Clara.

Victor P. Danhi, Associate: Mr. Danhi's practice focuses on advising automotive industry clients, including large national and regional dealership groups, in consumer class actions and complex litigation, federal and state regulatory matters, unfair competition cases, consumer warranty claims, consumer fraud litigation, franchise disputes and the sale or acquisition of motorcycle dealerships. Mr. Danhi has successfully defended automotive dealers at trial in consumer warranty, breach of contract and consumer fraud cases and has successfully resolved numerous consumer class action lawsuits.

He earned his JD degree from Loyola Law School, Los Angeles, where he was a member of the Scott Moot Court Honors Board. He graduated *cum laude* from Pepperdine University with a BS degree.

Melanie S. Joo, Associate: Ms. Joo's practice focuses on commercial litigation, class actions, consumer litigation, government regulatory matters and administrative proceedings. At Venable, she led the Automotive Group's Compliance Team, conducting regulatory reviews of advertising, finance, and franchise laws for automobile dealerships, industry associations and advertising agencies. Ms. Joo has represented dealerships in litigation and provided counsel to electric vehicle manufacturers and advertising agencies in a variety of compliance and regulatory matters. She counsels clients on unfair competition issues, advertising matters, licensing, sales practices and consumer protection laws.

Ms. Joo earned her JD degree from Tulane University Law School, where she served Senior Case Notes Editor at the *Journal of American Arbitration* and sat on the Executive Editorial Board. She obtained her BA degree from the University of Southern California.