

Reed Smith Expands Commercial Litigation Group Douglas A. Albritton Joins Firm's Chicago Office

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(October 20, 2009, Chicago, IL) – Commercial litigation attorney Douglas A. Albritton has joined Reed Smith LLP, one of the 15 largest law firms in the world as a partner in the firm's Commercial Litigation Group resident in its Chicago office.

Mr. Albritton was formerly a partner at Chicago-based Freeborn & Peters LLP.

“The addition of an experienced commercial litigator with Doug's reputation represents another significant step in the growth of our Chicago office.” said Robert A. Roth, Chair of Reed Smith's Commercial Litigation Group in Chicago. “Doug has well-established relationships with a number of private equity and venture capital firms and their portfolio companies so combining his experience in that specialized litigation arena with the firm's private equity practice is a winning combination.”

Mr. Albritton's experience includes the prosecution and defense of trade secret, non-compete and non-solicit disputes (and all related causes of action) in many different industries and states. With his significant experience handling the emergency TROs and preliminary injunctions that these cases generate, clients frequently seek out Mr. Albritton to handle other “crisis” matters requiring around the clock attention, and the coordination of interdisciplinary attorney and non-attorney teams acting in judicial and other venues. Examples include helping clients respond to employee arrests for criminal activity (and threatened claims arising there from), significant management transitions, and vendor threats to company supply chains.

Mr. Albritton also represents directors and officers in securities and shareholder derivative class actions, and companies and shareholders in shareholder oppression claims. With his experience in these areas, Mr. Albritton advises investors and other corporate entities in disputes arising out of various contemporary investment structures, including pooled investment funds and multi-layered real estate investment programs. This experience permits Mr. Albritton to handle many other kinds of complex disputes, including those with class action and MDL issues.

Mr. Albritton's representative clients include individuals, and private and public corporations, operating in diverse industries including paper production, software development and distribution, vehicle service contracts, and real-estate development.

"Reed Smith affords me an outstanding international platform upon which to expand my litigation practice and work on significant complex commercial cases," said Mr. Albritton. "In addition, my clients' legal needs cover a wide range of legal disciplines, and extend both nationally and internationally. I am excited about having the capability through Reed Smith's broad international practice to provide these clients with the full range of services they require."

In 2007, Mr. Albritton was selected by the *Chicago Daily Law Bulletin* and *Chicago Lawyer* publications as one of the "40 Under Forty Illinois Attorneys to Watch." A 1995 graduate of the University of Illinois School of Law, he served as assistant legal counsel to the Illinois House Democrats and the Speaker of the House in 1996 and 1997, where his work included analyzing and drafting legislation, and providing general legal advice to House members on issues of state and federal law. With this experience, he occasionally assists clients on various state and local government matters. He earned his undergraduate degree from Illinois State University in 1992.

"Doug is a welcome addition to the Chicago office," said Michael LoVallo, Reed Smith's Chicago Managing Partner. "His practice is well-aligned with our existing commercial litigation practice and his work with private equity companies in the Chicago region fits well with our active private equity practice in this office."

In 2008, Mr. Albritton was appointed Chair-elect of the American Bar Association's Tort Trial & Insurance Practice Section, Business Law Committee (BLC) for 2011-2012. The BLC has a diverse membership of business clients, in-house attorneys, staff counsel and plaintiffs' counsel and focuses on contemporary business litigation issues. Doug currently is in charge of the BLC Committee Newsletter (which comes out 4 times a year), and was just awarded the opportunity to coordinate a national CLE program to be held at the ABA's 2010 Annual Meeting in San Francisco on the intersection of modern communication technology, business litigation and counseling and the First Amendment.

Doug's community activities include service with Illinois March of Dimes Signature Chef's Auction, and volunteer work as debate judge for the National Association of Urban Debate Leagues' inner-city program.

Mr. Albritton is the second locally prominent litigator to join Reed Smith's Chicago office in recent months. John F. Hagan, Jr., moved from Kirkland & Ellis in July.