

PUBLIC JUSTICE



AMERICA'S PUBLIC INTEREST LAW FIRM

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 15, 2008

RENOWNED ATTORNEY CHOSEN TO LEAD PUBLIC JUSTICE FOUNDATION FOR 2008-09

Gerson H. Smoger – a Dallas and Oakland attorney renowned for representing people around the country who live near hazardous waste sites – has been elected president of the Public Justice Foundation, the Washington-based national organization of public interest lawyers and advocates.

Smoger was unanimously elected July 14 at the Foundation's annual meeting in Philadelphia. He will lead the 3,000-member group for the next year, succeeding Sandra H. Robinson, a prominent Washington, D.C. attorney.

Smoger said he will focus on raising public awareness of the Foundation's work in supporting the most diverse case docket of any public interest law firm in the country. Among other issues, Public Justice pursues civil rights and civil liberties, toxic torts, environmental protection, consumer rights, Title IX, and prisoner and detainee rights cases nationwide. It is considered to be the leading authority on mandatory arbitration and federal preemption – two devices that more and more corporations are using to limit customers, employees and investors' access to the courts.

“Where strong forces are constantly trying to strip away the public's right to have their day in court, Public Justice works tirelessly with some of the country's most experienced attorneys to make sure the public's causes and concerns are heard,” Smoger said. “That is why I am thrilled to have the opportunity to lead this organization in its fight on behalf of one client only: the American public.”

Four other attorneys were elected as officers of the Public Justice Foundation at the July 14th meeting: President-Elect Mona Lisa Wallace of Salisbury, N.C.; Vice President Harry Dietzler of Charleston, W. Va.; Treasurer Steven E. Fineman of New York City; and Secretary Jack Landskroner of Cleveland, Ohio. Five attorneys were elected to the organization's Executive Committee: Raymond P. Boucher of Beverly Hills, Calif.; Alan R. Brayton of Novato, Calif.; Linda Correia of Washington, D.C.; Jeffrey M. Goldberg of Chicago; and Theodore J. Leopold of Palm Beach Gardens, Fla.

In addition, 23 attorneys were elected or re-elected to the Public Justice Foundation Board of Directors: Roberta E. Ashkin and Rosalind Fuchsberg Kaufman, both of New York City; Russell W. Budd, Christina E. Mancuso, Roger L. Mandel, Ellen A. Presby and Scott Summy, all of Dallas, Tex.; Roxanne B. Conlin of Des Moines, Iowa; Lewis S. “Mike” Eidsen of Coral Gables, Fla.; Jeffrey D. Eisenberg of Salt Lake City, Utah; William A. Gaylord of Portland, Ore.; Wayne Hogan of Jacksonville, Fla.; Anne McGinness Kearsse of Mt. Pleasant, S.C.; Virginia Adams Marentette of Washington, D.C.; Vincent J. Moccio of Minneapolis, Minn; Antonio A. Romanucci of Chicago, Ill.; William A. Rossbach of Mizzoula, Mont.; Robert L. Sachs, Jr., and Bernard W. Smalley, both of Philadelphia, Pa.; Donald H. Slavik of Milwaukee, Wis.; Stephen Mark Smith of Hampton, Va.; Kenneth M. Suggs of Columbia, S.C.; and Steven N. Williams of Burlingame, Calif.

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Public Justice is America's public interest law firm, supported by – and calling on -- a nationwide network of more than 3,000 of the nation's top lawyers to pursue precedent-setting and socially significant litigation. It has a wide-ranging litigation docket in the areas of consumer rights, worker safety, civil rights and liberties, toxic torts, environmental protection, and access to the courts. Public Justice is the principal project of the Public Justice Foundation, a not-for-profit membership organization headquartered in Washington, DC, with a West Coast office in Oakland, California. The Public Justice web site address is www.publicjustice.net.