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Pgh. Attorney Addresses Conflict-of-Interest Questions at National Conference

PITTSBURGH, Pa., May 16: Pittsburgh attorney Robert Bernstein recently addressed one of the most common, yet elusive ethical questions lawyers face at the national Legal Forum of the Equipment Leasing and Finance Association in Miami, Fla, on May 8: When should a lawyer forgo the opportunity to represent a client due to a potential conflict of interest?

“Identifying potential conflicts of interest continue to pose ethical challenges for lawyers in many industries,” Bernstein said. “It is a gray area that raises questions often because the conflict is only a ‘potential conflict’ and rules that define these matters are sometimes unclear as to the correct and ethical standard to apply.”

Bernstein's presentation considered a number of situations and the applicable rules related to obligations to current clients. For example:

- Is it ethical to take on a new client that has a grievance with a company where an associate -- who is no longer with the firm -- represented more than two years ago?
- When is consent of the client (or former client) required?
- What are the duties related to revealing information while considering the balancing of new business development and legal ethics?

Through actual examples, Bernstein explored the nuances of these questions and applied a variety of tests that lawyers in many specialties can apply to their own practice.

A transcript of his presentation and supporting references are available at the firm's website: www.bernsteinlaw.com

Bernstein is managing partner of Bernstein Law Firm, which has more board-certified creditors' rights specialists in Pennsylvania than any other law firm. He has delivered keynote addresses and speeches on bankruptcy, ethics and creditor issues to professional organizations around the world.

Bernstein Law Firm, P.C. is a family-owned and managed law firm located in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The firm concentrates in Creditors' Rights, Bankruptcy and Restructuring, and Business Law. In addition to its more than 40 years of experience in these areas, the firm's capabilities include Banking, Administrative, Real Estate, Civil and Appellate Law.

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