

McKool Adds More Ex-Kasowitz Insurance Trial Attys In LA

By **Y. Peter Kang**

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McKool Smith PC on Monday added a former Kasowitz Benson Torres & Friedman LLP partner and two others with experience litigating large, complex coverage disputes to its insurance recovery practice in Los Angeles, just two months after the firm announced the group's formation with seven Kasowitz hires.

Michael John Miguel joins McKool Smith as a principal after previously serving as a partner with Kasowitz in Los Angeles, according to the firm. Prior to his nearly three-year tenure at Kasowitz, Miguel was a partner with K&L Gates LLP and Morgan Lewis & Bockius LLP, according to his LinkedIn profile. He is joined by former Kasowitz associates Brett DeArmond Bissett and Anna K. Milunas.



Michael John Miguel

The firm's insurance recovery practice was launched in February with the addition of seven former Kasowitz attorneys led by Law360 insurance MVP Robin Cohen. Since then, McKool Smith has hired two senior counsel and five associates to its New York office and today's additions bring the practice's numbers to 17 lawyers nationwide.

Miguel focuses his practice on insurance coverage matters and has obtained more than \$1 billion in insurance-related recoveries for his clients, the firm said. He also has experience handling disputes involving environmental, antitrust, intellectual property and toxic tort defense litigation matters, according to McKool Smith.

"I am really looking forward to rejoining Robin and the team," Miguel said in a statement. "Our practices are very complementary, so making the move to McKool Smith was a relatively easy decision to make. The firm is a highly-regarded litigation powerhouse, has a reputation for offering clients innovative fee arrangements, and we represent clients in the same industries. These three factors are very important to my practice."

Cohen, head of McKool Smith's insurance recovery practice, lauded the arrival of the new principal.

"Mike is an outstanding first-chair trial lawyer with significant experience in large complex coverage disputes. Our clients will benefit greatly from his expertise," Cohen said in the statement. "We worked closely together for a number of years, so I am very excited Mike has decided to stay with the team and join McKool Smith. His arrival expands our group to the West Coast, and bolsters our already deep

bench of trial lawyers.”

Miguel brings to McKool Smith experience litigating on behalf of policyholders in the energy sector to win insurance coverage for environmental liabilities, both onshore and offshore. Miguel helped secure the first reported decision finding that insurers had to pay for offshore pollution, while representing Taylor Energy Co. LLC in a dispute over oil cleanup in the Gulf of Mexico after Hurricane Ivan.

He received a bachelor’s degree from the University of California, Los Angeles and a law degree from the University of Southern California.

--Editing by Kelly Duncan.

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