

Jenner & Block Expands Bankruptcy and Restructuring Practice with the Addition of Experienced Restructuring Lawyers Doug Spelfogel and Derek Wright

News

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October 16, 2024 – NEW YORK/CHICAGO – Jenner & Block is pleased to announce that prominent restructuring lawyers Doug Spelfogel and Derek Wright have joined the firm as Partners in the New York and Chicago offices, respectively. Doug and Derek bring a wealth of experience in complex restructuring and bankruptcy litigation, further strengthening the firm’s renowned Bankruptcy and Restructuring Practice.

Doug Spelfogel will serve as a co-chair of the firm’s Bankruptcy and Restructuring Practice. He was previously co-leader of the Restructuring practice in New York of an Am Law 25 firm. Doug specializes in guiding financial institutions, private equity firms, hedge funds, creditors, creditor committees, trustees, and corporate leaders through complex restructurings and business reorganizations, as well as cross-border proceedings. His practice often involves high-stakes, multi-billion-dollar transactions, whether through out-of-court negotiations or in Chapter 11 bankruptcy proceedings. Doug has served as lead counsel for significant stakeholders in numerous landmark national reorganizations and liquidations, including JCPenney, Peabody Energy, Bernard L. Madoff Investment Securities, and American Airlines, earning recognition for “Restructuring Deal of the Year,” among other awards. Clients rely on Doug for his expertise in high-profile bankruptcies and cross-border cases, representing Fortune 100 companies, major financial institutions, and fiduciaries. Notably, he served as counsel to the Special SIPA trustee in the largest Ponzi scheme in U.S. history and has led litigation teams in billion-dollar fraud cases, reinforcing his reputation as a trusted advisor in complex and critical matters.

Derek Wright, an experienced restructuring attorney joining from the Chicago office of the same Am Law 25 firm, brings extensive experience in guiding clients through Chapter 11 proceedings, out-of-court restructurings, high-stakes bankruptcy litigation, Section 363 asset sales, and other distressed scenarios. Derek regularly represents a diverse array of stakeholders, including creditors, trustees, secured creditors, creditors’ committees, and debtors, across a broad range of industries. His notable representations include the Chapter 11 proceedings of JCPenney, LATAM Airlines, Halcón

Resources Corporation, and Avianca Holdings. In addition to his bankruptcy work, Derek has successfully represented clients in significant bankruptcy-related litigation, including a multi-national effort to recover nearly \$1 billion through various creditor claims. His depth of experience and ability to navigate complex financial disputes make him a valuable asset to clients facing challenging insolvency issues.

“We are thrilled to welcome Doug and Derek to Jenner & Block,” said Melissa Root and Catherine Steege, Co-Chairs of the firm’s Bankruptcy and Restructuring Practice. “Their deep experience in bankruptcy litigation and their track record of representing major financial institutions and creditors in high-stakes Chapter 11 cases will provide tremendous value to our clients. Doug and Derek are ideal additions as we continue to expand our ranks to support clients through high stakes restructuring and bankruptcy matters.”

“Jenner & Block's reputation for high-stakes litigation in both bankruptcy and restructuring is a perfect complement to the work I've been passionate about for years,” Doug said. “The firm’s collaborative culture and dedication to growing its restructuring practice, especially in New York, made this an exciting opportunity.”

Derek added, “I’m excited to join Jenner & Block’s distinguished and collaborative team. The firm’s emphasis on litigation excellence, combined with its full-service capabilities, will provide numerous advantages to our clients. I’m eager to continue building the restructuring practice, especially with the extensive cross-border work we anticipate.”

“Doug and Derek bring remarkable experience and leadership to our growing restructuring team” said Co-Managing Partners Katya Jestin and Randy Mehrberg. “Their arrival will enhance our capabilities in both New York and Chicago, offering our clients unmatched experience in handling the most complex and high-profile bankruptcy and restructuring cases.”

Doug and Derek’s addition to the firm highlights Jenner & Block’s ongoing commitment to expanding its Bankruptcy and Restructuring Practice across key markets. Their leadership in national and international restructuring cases will be instrumental in further solidifying the firm’s leadership in this space.

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