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James J. Kenny (1937-2011)

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James J. Kenny, a founding partner of the firm, was born in Miami and received his B.A. degree from the University of Miami, and his J.D. from Duke University Law School. (Mr. Kenny passed away in December 2011. The firm is proud of Mr. Kenny's accomplishments and contributions to the Bar, the community and his clients. In that spirit, we continue to post his biography to remind us all of his remarkable career and the origins of our law firm.)

Mr. Kenny began the practice of law at a Miami firm that represented plaintiffs and defendants in personal injury cases, and had a small but varied commercial litigation practice. He had approximately 25 jury trials and perhaps 5 or 6 non-jury trials during his first two years in practice. After litigating against the Dade County Attorneys office, he was offered a position as Assistant Dade County Attorney. During two years in that position, he had about 15 jury trials, all successful, in eminent domain cases for Dade County and other public bodies. He was then recruited as a partner to handle eminent domain cases by what became Kelly Black Black & Kenny, where he was drafted to help litigate an antitrust case. After a successful 91 day jury trial in that case with Michael Nachwalter and Hugo L. Black, Jr., he quickly developed a complex commercial litigation practice including antitrust cases. After 10 years as a partner, he left the Kelly Black firm with Michael Nachwalter and Tom Seymour and they formed Kenny Nachwalter & Seymour and practiced together for 36 years.

Mr. Kenny was an outstanding trial lawyer with approximately 75 jury and 25 non-jury trials. He handled complex commercial cases in Florida, Georgia, Tennessee, Ohio, Pennsylvania, California and Illinois, and was counsel of record in approximately 70 reported cases. He was admitted in the United States District Courts in the Middle and Southern Districts of Florida, the Federal Circuit Courts of Appeal for the Fifth, Seventh, Ninth and Eleventh Circuits and the Supreme Court of the United States. He served on and chaired the Eminent Domain and Antitrust Advisory Committees of the Florida Bar. In 1988, he was elected to membership in the American Law Institute. He was rated "AV" by Martindale-Hubbell every year since 1978 and was included in Best Lawyers in America for Business Litigation including Antitrust and Commercial Litigation in every issue from 1987 through 2003-2004.

Mr. Kenny's extensive experience in complex commercial litigation included

several important and successful cases as a Special Assistant Attorney General for Antitrust for the State of Florida, and a wide variety of cases including antitrust, business torts, contracts, partnerships, fiduciary duty, insurance coverage and bad faith, and other complex commercial cases.

In 1988, responding to a crisis in the availability of lawyers' professional liability insurance, the Florida Bar undertook the formation of its own professional liability company. Mr. Kenny participated in that project and served as a Director of that company - Florida Lawyers Mutual Insurance Company - from 1989 until 2003 and served as Chair of the Reinsurance and Underwriting Committees and as a member of the Executive, Investment, Underwriting and Claims Committees. In 1996, he, along with representatives of bar-related insurers in several other states, participated in the formation of Lawyers Reinsurance Company (Lawyers Re) and had served as a Director and member of the Underwriting Committee of Lawyers Re.

In the last few years of practice, Mr. Kenny acquired experience and developed skills in Arbitration and Mediation. He served as an Arbitrator for the American Arbitration Association, NASD Dispute Resolution, and the CPR Institute for Dispute Resolution. He also served on the AAA's Panel for Arbitration of Disputes arising from the Salt Lake City 2002 Winter Olympic Games, and served on the AAA's Large and Complex Case Panel.

The firm recognizes and appreciates James J. Kenny's outstanding leadership and contribution to its success.