Criminal Enforcement of Environmental Laws: What is the Current Climate?

One of the most relevant and controversial legal topics in today's practice is the criminal enforcement of environmental statutes. As a leader in the fields of Environment, Energy, and Natural Resources law, the University of Houston Law Center has brought together a distinguished panel of environmental law attorneys to address the issue, “Criminal Enforcement of Environmental Laws: What is the Current Climate?” This symposium is presented in conjunction with the 2012 Andrews Kurth Moot Court National Championship.

Panelists: Charles A. De Monaco, Joseph G. Block, George O. Wilkinson, Jr.
Moderator: Tracy D. Hester

Thursday, January 26, 2012
10:00am-3:00pm
The DoubleTree Hotel
400 Dallas St.
Houston, TX 77002
Lunch will be provided

Tracy D. Hester
Mr. Hester teaches environmental law and emerging technology courses at the University of Houston Law Center and also acts as director of its Environment, Energy and Natural Resource (EENR) Center. As Director of the EENR Center, Mr. Hester coordinates adjunct faculty courses on energy and environmental law in the University of Houston Law Center's program. Mr. Hester's research focuses on the innovative application of environmental laws to emerging technologies and risks, such as climate engineering, nanotechnologies, genetic modification, wind and other renewable power projects, and on novel compliance and liability issues. Prior to becoming a professor, Mr. Hester was a partner at Bracewell & Giuliani LLP for sixteen years and led the Houston office's environmental group. Mr. Hester was named the Top Environmental Lawyer in Houston in 2011 by Best Lawyers of America and was also elected to the Council of the American Bar Association's Section on Environment, Energy and Resources (SEER) in 2011. Mr. Hester is currently vice-chair of the Greater Houston Partnership's Environmental Policy Advisory Committee.

Charles A. De Monaco
Mr. De Monaco is a partner practicing at the law firm of Fox Rothschild LLP in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Mr. De Monaco concentrates his practice in securities litigation, corporate compliance and governance, environmental law, health care law, commercial litigation and white collar criminal defense. In addition to providing legal representation to both corporate and individual clients in the private sector, Mr. De Monaco is providing representation in federal civil litigation regarding restoration of the Florida Everglades. Mr. De Monaco infamously served as lead counsel for the United States Attorney's Office in Pittsburgh in the 1988 Ashland Oil spill, where the company was fined $2.25 million after a tank collapse sent 700,000 gallons of diesel fuel into the Monongahela and Ohio Rivers. Mr. De Monaco is also a former Assistant Chief of the Environmental Crimes Section of the U.S. Department of Justice in Washington, D.C. During his tenure with the Justice Department, Mr. De Monaco served as lead counsel for the United States in the criminal prosecution of U.S. v. Exxon and Exxon Shipping Co. for the massive 1989 Exxon Valdez Alaska oil spill. The criminal and civil settlements obtained by the government represented the largest comprehensive settlement in the history of law enforcement.

Joseph G. Block
Mr. Block is a partner at Venable, LLP whose practice concentrates on environmental criminal defense, environmental compliance programs, and internal investigations. Mr. Block is one of two former chiefs of the Department of Justice's Environmental Crimes Section now at Venable. Venable is the only law firm in the nation to have a practice group that focuses solely on representing clients facing environmental crimes issues. Mr. Block is an experienced litigator who has both defended and prosecuted white collar criminal cases. Mr. Block also previously served the U.S. Senate as counsel in congressional investigations. In addition to his focus on environmental crimes and compliance, Mr. Block is chair of the Trade and Environment Policy Advisory Committee (TEPAC), advising the U.S. Trade Representative and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator on environmental issues involved in international trade.

George O. Wilkinson, Jr.
Mr. Wilkinson is an environmental law attorney practicing at the law firm of Vinson & Elkins, LLP. Mr. Wilkinson's environmental law practice includes environmental litigation, civil and criminal environmental enforcement defense, emergency response, and environmental compliance counseling. Mr. Wilkinson advises clients on matters such as responding to refinery, chemical plant, pipeline, and industrial accidents, including government investigations and enforcement actions, citizen suits, and tort litigation. Mr. Wilkinson further counsels clients on a range of environmental matters including Clean Air Act, Clean Water Act, Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, CERCLA, natural resource damage issues, and risk management plan issues. Mr. Wilkinson defends corporations and individuals charged with or investigated for criminal violations of state and federal environmental laws.

Registration:
$75.00 per Registrant

To Register:
Http://www.law.uh.edu/blakely/menc/2012championship.html
or contact The Blakely Advocacy Institute at 713-743-2065.

In conjunction with:

Special Thanks To:
Edison, McDowell & Hetherington LLP