

# Winstead Welcomes Energy, Environmental and Business Litigation Group and Opens New Orleans Office

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Houston/New Orleans, Oct. 1, 2012 — Law firm Winstead PC has hired an impressive group of energy, environmental, and business litigation attorneys, led by Richard (Rick) M. Simses and Paul M. Lavelle, former partners at Beirne, Maynard and Parsons who each have over 30 years of litigation experience, much of which is Louisiana-based. Simses, Charles Miers and Jon Vicklund are joining the firm's office in The Woodlands, Texas. Lavelle will open the New Orleans Winstead office, serving as its managing shareholder.

"We are very pleased that Rick and Paul and their team have joined Winstead," said Tom Hutcheson, chair of Winstead's energy and environmental law practice. "Rick is well known in Houston and both he and Paul are well-known in Louisiana where they have a significant case load. They are both highly knowledgeable admiralty lawyers, giving Winstead a new practice area to serve its clients. This group makes an excellent addition to Winstead's steadily growing litigation, energy and environmental practice areas."

Simses' practice focuses primarily on energy, environmental and other types of business litigation. He developed a specialty in admiralty law and is considered highly proficient in this area. He represents high profile clients and has handled numerous appellate arguments in state and federal courts. Simses is a member of the State Bars of Texas, Louisiana, and Colorado, and he has represented clients before the U.S. District Courts, U.S. Courts of Appeals for the 5th, 9th and Federal Circuits, and the U.S. Supreme Court. He is a member of the Maritime Law Association, the Texas Association of Defense Counsel and the Defense Research Institute. Simses received his J.D. from Loyola University College of Law.

Lavelle has significant trial experience in business litigation, products liability, construction law, environmental law and general civil litigation. He has defended numerous clients in lawsuits involving products liability, chemicals, class actions and the environment. He frequently speaks and presents for both the Defense Research Institute and the Louisiana Association of Defense Counsel. Lavelle has been honored with the Bernard J. Caillouet Award for Law Related Education, and the American Jurisprudence Award in both Constitutional Law and Corporations. He is a member of the State Bar of Louisiana and the U.S. Courts of Appeals for the 5th and 9th Circuits. Voted by his peers as a Louisiana Super Lawyer, Lavelle received his J.D. from Loyola University College of Law.

Miers' practice focuses on business litigation, employment issues, maritime claims, product liability claims, toxic and mass tort claims, and class actions defense. He also works with clients on dispute resolution. He is a member of the State Bar of Texas and represents clients in all Texas State and Federal Courts. Miers received his J.D. from the University of Houston Law Center and was a member of the National Moot Court Team.

Vicklund's practice focuses on litigation in real estate, premises and products liability, personal injury torts, insurance defense, and commercial and environmental litigation. He is a member of the State Bar of Texas and represents clients in the U.S. District Courts of Texas and Colorado and the U.S. Courts of Appeals for the Fifth and Federal Circuits. He received his J.D. from the South Texas College of Law.

Winstead is among the largest business law firms in Texas. Winstead attorneys and consultants serve as trusted advisors to mid-market and large businesses, providing a core range of legal services that are critical to their operation and success. Winstead currently has offices in Austin, Dallas, Fort Worth, Houston, San Antonio, and The Woodlands, Texas; Charlotte, North Carolina and Washington, D.C. It will be opening a New Orleans office within the next month. For detailed information about Winstead, visit [www.winstead.com](http://www.winstead.com).