

# Benesch Adds Four to Energy Practice in Columbus Office

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Benesch continues to follow its strategic growth plan with the addition of four lawyers serving the Energy industry.

The firm is pleased to welcome partners Trevor Alexander and Mark Keaney, along with of counsel Steven Lesser and associate Kari Hehmeyer, to its Columbus office. The attorneys come from Cleveland-based firm Calfee, Halter, and Griswold, and will be joining the Benesch's growing Energy Practice Group just as the industry braces for possible regulatory changes under the incoming administration of President-elect Joseph R. Biden.

"We are thrilled to add this team to our deep bench of industry-focused litigation and business transaction talent," said Gregg Eisenberg, Managing Partner and Executive Committee Member. "Our clients in the constantly evolving Energy sector can rely on the experience and perspective that these four attorneys can bring to an array of complex business problems, from managing risk on a daily basis to handling bet-the-company litigation."

Practicing on energy-related matters for 15 years, Alexander advises infrastructure investors, electric and gas utilities, as well as independent power producers and pipeline companies, on federal and state regulatory issues regarding renewable energy and other technologies.

Additionally, Alexander has represented both public sector and private sector clients in a broad variety of public utility matters. Most recently, he obtained regulatory approval of a merger involving an Ohio natural gas utility and was then able to obtain one of the highest allowed rates of return in the nation for that utility. Alexander also regularly practices before the Ohio Power Siting Board. He recently obtained approval for the construction of a 105 MW combined heat and power natural gas generation facility. He graduated *cum laude* from the Ohio State University's Moritz College of Law and *summa cum laude* from Capital University.

Keaney focuses his practice on the regulation of energy companies and public utilities by state and federal agencies. He also advises clients on energy industry transactions, with a special focus on renewable power purchase agreements.

Keaney also has counseled a range of clients in the electric, natural gas, and wastewater sectors, including companies engaged in the generation, sale, and purchase of energy.

He graduated *magna cum laude* from Saint Louis University School of Law and *summa cum laude* from Miami University.

Lesser has more than 30 years' experience working with public sector clients, including at the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio as Chief of Staff, Commissioner and as Chair of the Commission and Ohio Power Siting Board, advising businesses regarding public utility, telecommunication and

energy industry matters. His work has addressed critical legislative and regulatory issues in all aspects of energy, including the regulated, wholesale, and retail markets. He is actively involved in initiatives advancing distributed energy resources, renewable energy and grid modernization, and has represented industrial, commercial, trucking companies as well as innovative technology businesses.

He graduated from Capital University Law School, achieving both Order of the Curia and Order of the Barrister, and from State University of New York at Binghamton.

Hehmeyer focuses her practice on deregulated energy markets, working with competitive retail suppliers in multiple states. She also advises clients on energy industry transactions with a special focus on regulatory compliance and licensing matters.

She graduated *summa cum laude* from Capital University Law School and received her B.S. from the Fisher College of Business at The Ohio State University.

Alexander, Keaney, Lesser, and Hehmeyer are joining a firm rapidly making a name for itself in high-profile matters. In addition to national trial work, the Benesch team actively pursues cost-effective outcomes for multinational, publicly held and private companies, for-profit and non-profit boards, municipalities as well as other government entities, lenders, insurers and individuals in alternative dispute resolution forums and advises clients through a full range of business transactions.

The firm overall has also earned recognition. Nationally, since making its debut on the AmLaw 200 list in 2016, Benesch has advanced 27 places and is currently ranked at number 168.