PRESS RELEASES

Benesch Expands Energy Group in Chicago, Adding Big Law Partners Hanna Conger and John E. Rooney

FEBRUARY 1, 2024

Benesch, one of the fastest-growing firms on the AmLaw 200 list, is pleased to announce the addition of high-profile partners Hanna Conger and John Rooney to its Chicago office and growing Energy Group. The additions mark a growing trend of Big Law attorneys who have joined the Benesch team in recent years.

“Hanna and John are two of the best Energy lawyers in Illinois and have a long history of representing some of the largest utilities in the state,” said Benesch Energy Practice Group Chair Trevor Alexander. “We could not be more thrilled to add them to our team here at Benesch and expand our practice into the Chicago market.”

Conger concentrates her practice on helping energy-sector clients - from major investor-owned utilities to new ventures - navigate the regulatory environment, representing them before energy-regulatory commissions and in court. She also counsels clients on building grid infrastructure, setting utility rates, engaging in important transactions and devising innovative regulatory solutions for integrating electric vehicles, distributed energy resources, battery storage systems, microgrids and other new and emerging technologies into the grid.

Rooney focuses his practice on developing strategies for his public-utility clients to obtain regulatory approvals, and he leads litigation before regulatory commissions. He assists utilities with legislative proposals that may impact operations or the regulatory structures that govern them, and counsels on innovative alternative regulation proposals, competitive marketplace disputes, rate increase requests and rate design, acquisitions and merger approvals, service standards and regulatory rules.

“Businesses in the energy sector face a mix of challenging legal, business and regulatory issues,” said Benesch Managing Partner Gregg Eisenberg. “Adding John and Hanna to our team and expanding the geographic footprint of our integrated and cross-functional Energy Group will enable us to continue providing best-in-class service to our clients across this dynamic sector.”

Prior to joining Benesch, Conger and Rooney were partners at Jenner & Block.

At his past firm, Rooney played a key role in obtaining regulatory approval for a pilot program that incentivized renewable natural gas production facilities to locate within Nicor Gas Company’s service territory and provide this environmentally friendly fuel source to customers. He led a team that developed a strategy to present the idea as an alternative regulation plan and crafted the evidentiary presentation to support the proposal, marking it as the first of its kind in Illinois.

“Proactive, creative solutions form the foundation of client success in the ever-changing energy space,” said Rooney. “With its fast-growing and entrepreneurial Energy Group, Benesch is the ideal place to grow my practice.”

With a deep understanding of the technological, financial and accounting details that drive her clients' decision-making, Conger works closely with in-house legal teams, subject-matter experts and business-side decision-makers to create and execute compelling arguments in litigation. "I am thrilled to be joining Benesch," she said, "and to work alongside a terrific team of attorneys who share my passion for the energy sector and my commitment to advising clients through their most challenging legal issues."

Benesch has pursued an ambitious national growth strategy in recent years, expanding 190% in Chicago alone since 2018. In 2023, the firm added 83 lateral hires nationwide.