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Al J. Pranaitis Elected to Board; Presented Volunteer of the Year and Meritorious Service Awards by Statewide Defense Attorney Association

Chicago, IL - Al J. Pranaitis, a partner in the Alton law firm of Hoagland, Fitzgerald, Smith & Pranaitis has been elected to the board of directors for the Illinois Association of Defense Trial Counsel (IDC). The IDC is the premiere association of attorneys in Illinois representing business, corporate, professionals, and other individual defendants in civil litigation. With nearly 1,000 members, the IDC is the voice of the defense bar in Illinois.

As a director of the IDC, Mr. Pranaitis will assist the association in its work with the business, insurance, and medical communities in support of tort reform legislation with a goal of ensuring equal justice for all parties involved in civil court cases. He will serve a three year term.

Mr. Pranaitis was also recognized by the IDC as the 2009 Volunteer of the Year and in addition, he received the Meritorious Service Award. The Volunteer of the Year Award is given for extraordinary contributions of time and leadership. The Meritorious Service Award is presented for service with great distinction. Mr. Pranaitis was awarded both honors for his expert guidance as Editor-in-Chief of the association's nationally recognized legal publication the *IDC Quarterly*.

Mr. Pranaitis is a graduate of St. Louis University School of Law. He is an active trial lawyer, handling all types of civil litigation. His peers have ranked him as a Leading Lawyer and an Illinois Super Lawyer every year since 2005. The Super Lawyer ranking identifies the top five percent of lawyers in the state, based upon research and surveys conducted by *Law and Politics* magazine.

The Illinois Association of Defense Trial Counsel (IDC) was organized in 1964 and currently has nearly 1,000 members. The purpose of the organization is to promote improvements in the administration of justice and enhance the service of the legal profession to the public; to encourage the prompt, fair and just disposition of tort litigation; to enhance the knowledge and improve the skills of defense lawyers; to advance the equitable and expeditious handling of disputes arising under all forms of insurance and surety contracts and to work for the elimination of court congestion and delays in civil litigation.

Membership in the IDC is open to any attorney who is a member in good standing of the bar of the State of Illinois; who is engaged actively in the practice of law either privately or on behalf of his/her corporate employer; who is of high professional standard; and who devotes a substantial portion of his or her professional practice to the representation of business, corporate, insurance, professional or individual civil litigants involving tort, contract, insurance, employment, municipal or business matters, and do not, for the most part, represent plaintiffs in personal injury litigation.

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