

The Retail Litigation Center Announces New Defense Division

ARLINGTON, VA., January 17, 2019 – Today, the Retail Litigation Center (RLC) announced the formation of the new RLC Defense Division, which is being created in partnership with two founding law firm members, Akin Gump and McGuireWoods. After filing nearly 150 amicus briefs since the Retail Industry Leaders Association (RILA) established the RLC in 2010, the RLC is launching the first-ever program dedicated to helping the retail industry address aggressive plaintiff class action litigation at the front end.

The hallmarks of the successful retail industry are exactly what make it especially susceptible to meritless class action litigation: namely, the millions of consumers that interact with retailers on a daily basis and the hundreds of millions of people that retailers employ. The plaintiffs bar has become increasingly ingenious in finding new ways to create costly litigation out of old laws. The RLC Defense Division is developing unique new programs to help the retail industry identify vulnerabilities before the plaintiffs' bar strikes and to work collaboratively to minimize the damage when it does. These programs will offer retail corporate counsel resources to deal with the challenges that they see, not just from the laws and policies that are set by the appellate judiciary, but by the plaintiffs' bar that barrages them every day.

"My co-chair, Kathryn Deal, and I are delighted to bring our team's experience and the depth of Akin Gump's strength in combating frivolous consumer class actions, such as the wave of abusive TCPA litigation, to create the new RLC Defense Division. We are committed to helping retailers 'see around the corner' to identify threats before they become trends and to take practical steps to address them," said Meredith Slawe, partner at Akin Gump and co-head of the

firm's retail industry group "We look forward to collaborating with Amy and her excellent team at McGuireWoods in this effort."

"Based on my decade plus experience as a corporate retail employment litigator, I know firsthand how much meritless demand letters and complaints cost retailers every day in terms of focus and resources that could be used for far more productive ends. I also know just how much retailers can accomplish if they work together," said Amy Turk, partner at McGuireWoods. I am proud to bring the depth of McGuireWoods' class action team to this initiative. We are delighted that the Retail Litigation Center is developing the Defense Division and are committed to using our skill set and experience to help unite the retail industry against a common enemy: meritless mass action litigation."

"The Retail Litigation Center selected Akin Gump and McGuire Woods after an extensive vetting process not only for their litigation prowess, which was table stakes, but because of their deep understanding of the industry, the practical approach they have demonstrated for helping the industry address these challenges, and their commitment to the Defense Division's success," said Rhonda Taylor, Executive Vice President & General Counsel of Dollar General Corporation and Chair of the Retail Litigation Center. "I strongly encourage every major retailer in the United States to join us. The RLC Defense Division is dedicated to building programs to serve retail corporate counsel in their daily battle with the plaintiffs' bar. The more retailers who join with us, the stronger our industry will become overall."

About the Retail Litigation Center

The Retail Litigation Center is a public policy organization that identifies and engages in legal proceedings that affect the retail industry. The RLC, whose members include some of the country's largest retailers, was formed to provide courts with retail industry perspectives on significant legal issues, and highlight the potential industry-wide consequences of legal principles that may be determined in pending cases.

About Akin Gump

Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP is a leading international law firm with more than 900 lawyers in offices throughout the United States, Europe, Asia and the Middle East.

About McGuireWoods

McGuireWoods LLP is a leading international law firm with 1,100 lawyers in 22 offices worldwide. It ranks as the top firm in the business of law in Financial Times' prestigious North America Innovative Lawyers report. The firm has been recognized 13 times on BTI Consulting's "Client Service A-Team" — elite firms singled out for client service excellence based on unprompted feedback from clients in major companies. Its full-service public affairs arm, McGuireWoods Consulting LLC, offers infrastructure and economic development, strategic communications and grassroots advocacy, and government relations solutions. For more information, visit www.mcguirewoods.com.

About the Retail Industry Leaders Association

RILA is the trade association of the world's largest and most innovative retail companies. RILA members include more than 200 retailers, product manufacturers, and service suppliers, which together account for more than \$1.5 trillion in annual sales, millions of American jobs and more than 100,000 stores, manufacturing facilities and distribution centers domestically and abroad.

###