

# Plunkett Cooney promotes Block, Hurley, Lettiere to partners of the firm

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Plunkett Cooney, one of the Midwest's oldest and largest law firms, recently named five attorneys as its newest partners.

Drew L. Block, Michael C. Dennis, Daniel J. Hurley, Melissa J. Lettiere and Jesse A. Zapczynski were promoted by vote of Plunkett Cooney's Board of Directors, which was based on recommendations by members of the firm's Shareholder Evaluation Committee, with the change in status effective on Jan. 1.

A member of Plunkett Cooney's Bloomfield Hills, Michigan office, Block focuses his practice primarily in the area of insurance coverage. He represents property and casualty insurance companies in coverage disputes involving bad faith claims, intellectual property, first-party property loss, construction accidents and sexual abuse and molestation claims. He also has experience handling litigation involving commercial and contract disputes, premises and product liability claims, and medical malpractice claims.

A 2003 graduate of Loyola University Chicago School of Law, Block is licensed to practice in the Michigan, Illinois and Ohio state courts, federal district courts in Michigan, Wisconsin and Illinois, as well as in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit. He is a member of the Federation of Defense & Corporate Counsel and DRI. He received his undergraduate degree, *magna cum laude*, from The Ohio State University in 2000.

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Dennis is also a member of the firm's Bloomfield Hills office, and he concentrates his practice on the defense of insurers, corporations and individuals in a range of civil litigation matters.

Former in-house counsel for a Fortune 1000 property and casualty insurance company, Dennis has expertise in first-party no-fault and third-party automobile negligence litigation, insurance coverage disputes and subrogation claims. He is a member of the firm's Transportation Law Practice Group, and his expertise extends to the defense of personal injury, premises, product and general liability cases throughout Michigan.

Dennis received his law degree from the University of Toledo College of Law in 2011. While there, he received awards for outstanding achievement in trial practice. He previously clerked for the Monroe County Prosecutor's Office and served as a judicial extern for former 38<sup>th</sup> District Court Judge Joseph A. Costello Jr.

A member of the firm's Columbus, Ohio office, Hurley concentrates his practice in the areas of insurance and general negligence law, defending motor vehicle litigation, premises and product liability claims, and employment law disputes. He also defends insurance coverage litigation involving personal, commercial, professional, and errors and omissions claims.

An AV-Preeminent Martindale-Hubbell peer review rated attorney, Hurley has been named to the Best Lawyers in America list for Insurance Law for the past two years. He is a member of the Ohio State Bar Association, the DRI, the Ohio Association of Civil Trial Attorneys, the Columbus Claims Association and ALFA International.

Admitted to practice in state and federal courts in Ohio, Hurley received his law degree from Cleveland State University - Cleveland-Marshall College of Law in 1986 and his undergraduate degree, *cum laude*, from Xavier University in 1983.

A member of the firm's Commercial Litigation Practice Group and co-leader of the Real Estate and Title Insurance Law Practice Group, Melissa J. Lettiere represents lenders, commercial and residential real property owners, national title insurance companies and commercial businesses.

Lettiere, who is a member of the firm's Chicago, Illinois office, litigates lien priority disputes, title and mortgage fraud, title and mortgage lien validations, quiet title actions, foreclosures and real estate transaction fraud. Her practice also includes contract and lease drafting, as well as the defense of litigation involving loss of valuation, subrogation and recovery, among other types of claims.

Admitted to practice in state and federal courts in Illinois, Lettiere received her law degree from The John Marshall Law School in 2007. She received her undergraduate degree in 2002 from the University of Iowa. Lettiere is a member of the American Bar Association's (ABA) 2016 Leadership Academy class and the ABA's Title Insurance Litigation Committee and the Appellate Advocacy Committee of

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the ABA's Torts Trial Insurance Practice Section.

Zapczynski is a member of the firm's Bloomfield Hills office and Transportation Law Practice Group who focuses his practice on the defense of first- and third-party auto liability, bodily injury, and uninsured and under insured motorist cases on behalf of national insurance companies and their policyholders. Additionally, he has significant experience working with ERISA plans and other healthcare coverage potentially affecting these matters, as well as expertise in the investigation and resolution of fraudulent motor vehicle liability claims.

Admitted to practice in state and federal courts in Michigan, Zapczynski is a member of the Michigan Defense Trial Counsel and the State Bar of Michigan. He is a 2010 *cum laude* graduate of Western Michigan University Cooley Law School and a 2007 graduate of Michigan State University.

Established in 1913, Plunkett Cooney is a leading provider of business and litigation services to clients in the private and public sectors. The firm employs approximately 140 attorneys in seven Michigan cities, as well as in Chicago, Illinois, Columbus, Ohio and Indianapolis, Indiana.

Plunkett Cooney has achieved the highest rating (AV) awarded by Martindale-Hubbell, a leading, international directory of law firms, and the firm was recently named a "Best Law Firm" nationally in 12 practice areas, including appellate law, as determined by U.S. News – Best Lawyers® in 2023.

*For more information about Plunkett Cooney's new partners, contact the firm's Director of Marketing and Business Development, John Cornwell, at (248) 901-4008; jcornwell@plunkettcooney.com.*

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