



FDCC
DEFENSE LAWYERS. DEFENSE LEADERS.



May 2, 2025 -- Issue 275

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Good Morning!

Here are your top 5+ things to know about developments, upcoming events and progress being made on initiatives the Federation of Defense & Corporate Counsel is undertaking on behalf of all our members.



Scan the QR Code to easily access the registration page for the 2025 Annual Meeting at the spectacular Stein Eriksen Lodge and its sister property, the Chateau Deer Valley Resort located on the eastern slopes of the Wasatch Mountain Range in Park City, UT.

We look forward to seeing you July 28 - August 2, 2025 as we "Train with Champions" and "Go for Gold" together! **Stay tuned for the brochure** and to register for all the fabulous activities that our Conference Team have put together for you and your family!

#1 Supreme Court Update



FDCC's [Appellate Law Section](#) presented an overview of recent US Supreme Court cases and their impact on the industry, at our recent Winter Meeting in Charleston, SC.

For those unable to attend, or should you wish to share an audio recording of the session with your colleagues, please [click here](#). Once open, click the play button (Pay no attention to the "No Signal" wording).

Chair [Larry Ebner](#) moderated the session that included an esteemed panel of Federation members and an overview of the following cases:

- *Loper Bright Enterprises v. Raimondo*, 144 S. Ct. 2244 (2024); presented by [Todd Page](#)
- *Corner Post, Inc. v. Bd. of Gov. of the Fed. Res. Sys.*, 144 S. Ct. 2440 (2024); presented by [Denise Marra DePekary](#)
- *Securities and Exchange Comm'n v. Jarkesy*, 144 S. Ct. 2117, 219 L.Ed.2d 650 (2024); presented by: [Thomas Paschos](#)
- *Medical Marijuana, Inc. v. Horn*, No. 23-365; presented by Laurent J. Demosthenidy
- *Coinbase, Inc. v. Suski*, 144 S. Ct. 1186 (2024); presented by [Charlie Frazier](#)

#2 Culture Building Strategies Roundtable

May 7th at 2:00PM ET | 11:00AM PT



Jody Briandi



Nick Haigler

Is your firm struggling with attorney retention? Looking to strengthen your professional development programs? Our subject matter experts [Jody Briandi](#) of Hurwitz Fine and [Nick Haigler](#) of Robinson Gray will team up with culture specialist Kelly Reese to share proven strategies that have transformed law firm environments across the country.

We'll discuss:

- Actionable professional development frameworks that engage associates
 - Communication techniques that build trust and transparency
- Retention tactics that actually work in today's competitive legal market

[Click](#) on the link in the **red box** below to register for the opportunity to gain practical insights you can implement immediately, and feel free to share the invitation with others from your firm.

Event Details:

Date: Wednesday, May 7th, 2025

Time: 2:00 PM ET - 11:00 AM PT

Format: Virtual Roundtable

Cost: Complimentary for FDCC members and their colleagues

Don't attend alone!

Please feel free to forward this invitation to colleagues who would benefit from this important discussion.

We look forward to having you join us.

[Please click here to register for the roundtable](#)

#3 New FDCC Podcast Episodes Released



**FED
SPEAKS**
A PRODUCTION OF THE FEDERATION
OF DEFENSE & CORPORATE COUNSEL

Our FedSpeaks Podcast Team has been busy recording these new episodes for your enjoyment and information. Click on the title links below to listen to each podcast.

FedLife Committee's Chair [Claire Parsons](#) of Bricker Graydon, LLP speaks with [Caroline Berdzik](#) of Goldberg Segalla and [Paul Finamore](#) of Pessin Katz Law, P.A. on "[How Busy Lawyers Manage Extra Activities](#)". Listen in as our three defense counsel members as they discuss how they wrote and edited chapters for a new

treatise on Employment Contracts for LexisNexis and how they celebrate the completion of big projects!



[Claire Parsons](#)



[Caroline Berdzik](#)



[Paul Finamore](#)

Jill Pedigo Hall of the von Briesen & Roper law firm and Chad Hatmaker of Wolf, McCane, Bright, Allen & Carpenter in Knoxville, TN offer the next episode in their ongoing series "[True Employment Tales](#)" and have a very interesting discussion with Rob Sniffen of Sniffen & Spellman, P.A. in Tallahassee, FL on his practice of employment law since 1994. Check out how these FDCC Defense Counsel members have honed their skills and approached unscripted situations in actual cases for which there was no playbook...and lived to tell the tale, while gaining some "cuts on their chins" along the way!



[Chad Hatmaker](#)

[Jill Pedigo Hall](#)

[Robert Sniffen](#)

#4 Staying Aware of New Laws in Your State

By: Kelsie Sullivan & Michael Carr



Kelsie Sullivan



Michael Carr

Springtime in Oklahoma can bring severe weather. Also, as in most states, spring brings new legislative bills and debates. It is important to stay aware of those and determine whether they may apply to your practice, clients and companies. Many states have tools available to keep you aware. In Oklahoma, we have the ability to watch live sessions of the committees which gives insight into the direction of these bills, and what might become law.

Recently, in Oklahoma, HB 2144, originally entitled the “Insurance Consumer’s Protection Act”, passed the Oklahoma House of Representatives with a unanimous vote. The Bill passed through the Senate Rules Committee, April 24, 2025, with a 14-2 vote in favor of passing the Bill as amended including clarifying references throughout that this is applicable only to “health” insurance claims.

The Bill was amended in the title of the prospective law as well as in the Bill itself to ensure the word “health” is contained within the title and throughout the Bill to clarify questions that this Bill, as originally written, appeared to apply to property and casualty and auto claims. It was made clear that this Bill does not apply to such claims during these live sessions.

One of the Bill’s sponsors claimed that the “Bill is a vote for the citizens allowing the hospitals and medical providers the ability to file third party beneficiary status bad faith lawsuits as a method for Oklahoma citizens to collect health benefits they would not otherwise be able to challenge on their own.” During the live sessions, he noted that bad faith litigation in this manner should only be used in “extreme cases.”

[Please click here to read the entire article](#)

Kelsie Sullivan is an FDCC Defense Counsel Member and Of Counsel at McAfee & Taft in Tulsa, OK, where her practice involves representing insurance carriers of all sizes, including a number of Fortune 500 clients, in all phases of insurance law and litigation. While the majority of her practice is focused specifically on defending insurers in personal and commercial coverage disputes and bad faith litigation, she is also often called upon to provide counsel to insurers regarding claims handling, coverage issues, and dispute avoidance.

Michael Carr is also an FDCC Defense Counsel Member and Of Counsel with the firm. He handles a broad range of tort claims, including those involving civil rights, employment, insurance coverage and bad faith, E&O liability, product liability, professional liability, medical malpractice, industrial accidents, trucking accidents, catastrophic workplace injuries, and wrongful death. He has also additionally mediated disputes involving construction claims, auto negligence, personal injury, consumer claims, and complex business transactions.

#5 AI, Insurance & Regulation Conference

May 30, 2025



The University of Connecticut **Insurance Law Center** in conjunction with the University of Minnesota Law School have extended a **free invitation to all FDCC Members** and their colleagues to attend (either in person or virtually), their **AI, Insurance, Law, and Regulation**

Conference at **UConn Law School** in Hartford, CT. The event will cover key topics including:

- AI's influence on legal frameworks,
- insurance coverage for AI risks,
- discrimination and bias in AI systems, and
- the use of generative AI in insurance practices.

Featured speakers include prominent insurance and tort law scholars, as well as leaders from the industry and regulatory bodies. The full agenda, and the registration form can be accessed here:

<https://ilc.law.uconn.edu/2025/03/17/conference-ai-insurance-law-and-regulation/>. Please register by May 9th.

#5.1 The Passing of Ramune Barkus



FDCC Past President Dan Kohane shared that former FDCC Defense Counsel member Ramune Elisabeth Barkus has passed away. She worked at the firm of Hemer and Barkus (in which she and her husband Ralph were partners), and then at Barkus and Associates in Glendale, CA.

Many of us will remember Ramune and Ralph (who passed away several years ago), as they were both active members in the Federation and, in point of fact, were the very first husband and wife couple to be members of the FDCC. Their lively personalities and hilarious stories engaged those fortunate enough to be in their company over the years. Ramune was born in New South Wales, Australia, was an exchange student at Oxford University in England, and was admitted to the bar in California in 1979 where she became a prominent medical malpractice defense attorney until she retired in 2023. In addition to the FDCC, Ramune was also a member of ADTA and the Inns of Court in Los Angeles.

She also served as a member of the Board of Directors of the Black AIDS Institute in Los Angeles. A regular subscriber to the LA Philharmonic Orchestra concert series at the Hollywood Bowl, she also enjoyed visits to her cabin in Big Bear City, theater, travel, photography, birding, cooking, entertaining, sport fishing and her two cats. Ramune lived large and favored large necklaces, large hats, and large parties. Her kindness and friendship touched the hearts of many people throughout her career - including all of us - and she will be remembered for her many positive contributions to family, friends, colleagues and clients.

FDCC Past President John Woodard shared this story as he reflected on the memory that he and his wife Carolyn had of the lunch at an Italian restaurant with Ramune and Ralph at the FDCC Meeting in Palm Springs along with John & Jan Fitts. "We were there for three hours, and I am told alcohol/red wines were served.

The owners brought a bottle of Lemoncello for us to enjoy with his compliments.
We all napped before the gala! Good memories."

#5.1 Welcome to Our New Members!



Please join us in welcoming our newest members
who are joining the Federation Family:



Scott Seabolt is a Partner with **Hickey, Hauck Bishoff Jeffers & Seabolt** in Plymouth, Michigan where his practice is focused on [Privately Owned Business Disputes; Automotive Supply Chain Counseling & Litigation; Contract Disputes; U.C.C. Sales Disputes](#); Internal Investigations; and Business & Commercial Litigation. He also represents business owners and entrepreneurs in business divorces, breach of partnership, member/shareholder oppression, breach of fiduciary duty, usurping corporate opportunities, post-purchase disputes, and other related matters.

Scott and his wife, [Janis](#) reside in Northville, MI.



Jordan Feldkamp-Levy is Litigation Counsel at **Shelter Insurance Company** of Columbia MO, where she manages and directs claims litigation, activities and case strategy in various states. She also directs branch employees in claims handling, litigation advice and other matters. Prior to her current responsibilities, Jordan practiced at the Blake P. Somers law firm in Cincinnati, OH, as well as at Kirkland and Summers in Dayton, OH.

Jordan and her husband, **Rob**, live in Denver, CO.

#5.2 What's on the Docket?



Please register and mark your calendar to attend the following FDCC events of relevant and timely substantive content:

- **May 7, 2025 at 2:00PM ET: Law Practice Management Section interactive discussion on "Culture Building Strategies"** with FDCC Defense Counsel members [Jody Briandi](#) and [Nick Haigler](#), who will be joined by Kelly Reese, a subject matter expert on building positive law firm work environments. [Click here to register.](#)
- **July 28 - August 3, 2025: Annual Meeting** at the [Stein Eriksen Lodge & The Chateaux at Deer Valley](#) in Park City, UT. "Go for Gold" with Convention Chair: [Tiffany Alexander](#) and Program Co-Chairs: [Lee Hall](#) and [Kile Turner](#). [Click here to register.](#)
- **September 14-16, 2025: Corporate Counsel Symposium** at the InterContinental Hotel in Chicago, IL. Co-Chairs: [Chelsey Golightly](#), [Nicole Benjamin](#), and [Tim Moore](#), Registration coming in Spring 2025.
- **November 5-7, 2025: Insurance Industry Institute** at the Westin Times Square Hotel in New York City. Co-Chairs: [Sarannah McMurtry](#) and [Jeff Van Volkenburg](#). Registration coming in Summer 2025.
- **February 24-28, 2026: Winter Meeting** at the [J.W. Marriott Desert Ridge Resort](#) in Scottsdale, AZ: "**Together We Rise From the Valley**". Convention Chair: [Frank Ramos](#); Program Chair: [Micalann Pepe](#).
- **July 26 - 31, 2026: Annual Meeting** at the [Corinthia Hotel in Lisbon, Portugal](#): "**A Mosaic of Memories in Lisbon**". Convention Chair: [Lee Hall](#); Program Chair: [Alycen Moss](#).

- **February 28-March 4, 2027: Winter Meeting** at the [Fountainbleu Hotel, Miami Beach, FL.](#)
- **July 25-30, 2027: Annual Meeting** at the [Fairmont Banff Springs, Banff, Alberta, Canada.](#)

...and finally,

Have a Nice Day...Whitney Lay Greene!



Whitney is an FDCC Defense Counsel Member, graduate of the 2023-2024 Ladder Down Class and a Partner in the Atlanta, GA office of Chartwell Law.

Whitney's practice is focused on a broad spectrum of matters in the fields of commercial transportation, ride-share/gig economy liability, premises liability, and product liability. She also handles complex liability and medical causation issues, including catastrophic injury and wrongful death claims.

If your time permits, please drop Whitney a quick note say "hello":

wgreene@chartwelllaw.com

Have a great day, Whitney and all the best to you and Joseph.
Thank you for being a valued member of the FDCC since 2023!



Why FDCC?

**"To be the inspired community of vetted defense counsel, exceptional
leaders and even better people."**