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United States Courts for the Ninth Circuit

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NEWS RELEASE

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Judge Laura S. Taylor Appointed to Ninth Circuit Bankruptcy Appellate Panel

SAN FRANCISCO – Chief Bankruptcy Judge Laura S. Taylor of the United States Bankruptcy Court for the Southern District of California in San Diego, has been appointed to the Ninth Circuit Bankruptcy Appellate Panel, which hears appeals of decisions made by all of the federal bankruptcy courts in the western states.

The appointment was announced today by Chief Judge Alex Kozinski, chair of the Judicial Council of the Ninth Circuit, which is responsible for selecting judges to serve on the Bankruptcy Appellate Panel, or BAP.

“Judge Taylor has truly excelled as a member of the bankruptcy bench. She brings a great deal of knowledge, experience and energy to her new role,” Judge Kozinski said.

Judge Taylor is scheduled to begin her seven-year term on the BAP on December 31, 2012. She will succeed U.S. Bankruptcy Judge Eileen W. Hollowell of Arizona, who has served on the panel since 2008.

Judge Taylor, 54, was appointed to the U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the Southern District of California in 2008 and elevated to chief judge earlier this year. Prior to coming onto the bench, she had been an administrative partner in the banking and finance practice group in the San Diego office of Sheppard, Mullin, Richter & Hampton LLP. She had been with the firm since 1983 as an associate, partner and of counsel.

As a lawyer, Judge Taylor was active in *pro bono* service and received numerous awards, including recognition from the San Diego Bar community and the State Bar of California. While on a leave of absence from her firm from 1995 to 1998, she worked for the San Diego Volunteer Lawyer Program and founded the organization’s Special Education Project, which supported programs for children with special educational needs. She

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authored a law practice manual, "Protecting the Rights of the Differently Abled Child, A Guide for SDVLP Volunteer Attorneys."

Judge Taylor has been active in judicial governance, initially as a lawyer representative to the Ninth Circuit Judicial Conference, an annual gathering of judges and lawyers from throughout the West. After coming onto the bench, she was appointed to the Ninth Circuit Judicial Conference Committee and served as its chair for the 2012 circuit conference.

A native of Winston Salem, North Carolina, Judge Taylor received her B.A. in English and political science in 1979, graduating Phi Beta Kappa from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She received her J.D. in 1983 from Duke University, where she served on the school's moot court board.

The BAP is based in the Richard H. Chambers United States Court of Appeals Building in Pasadena, California. Historically, the BAP has handled between 49 percent and 60 percent of all bankruptcy appeals originating out of bankruptcy courts throughout the Ninth Circuit (district courts hear the remainder).

The BAP was established in 1979 by the Judicial Council of the Ninth Circuit as an alternative forum for hearing bankruptcy appeals. Since then, it has disposed of more than 15,000 cases, including more than 5,000 decided on the merits. New appeals filed numbered 1,011 in fiscal year 2011, up 29 percent from the prior fiscal year.

BAP judges serve a term of seven years and are eligible for a 3-year extension. Other bankruptcy judges from around the circuit also serve on appellate panels on a *pro tem* basis.

The Ninth Circuit was the first federal circuit to establish a bankruptcy appellate panel. Other circuits with bankruptcy appellate panels are the First, Sixth, Eighth and Tenth circuits. For more information, visit: <http://www.ce9.uscourts.gov/bap>.

The U.S. Courts for the Ninth Circuit consists of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit and the federal district and bankruptcy courts in 15 judicial districts serving nine western states and two Pacific Island jurisdictions.

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