

MAZANEC, RASKIN & RYDER CO., L.P.A.

attorneys and counsellors at law

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George V. Pilat

PARTNER

AREAS OF PRACTICE

Business Law & Real Estate

Employment & Labor Law

Insurance Coverage & Bad Faith

Directors & Officers Liability

Insurance Agent Errors & Omissions

Professional Liability & Licensing

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PROFILE

George joined MRR in July 2013 as a partner in the Cleveland office. Before that he was a partner in a small downtown law firm handling insurance law for agents and insurers, commercial litigation, and business transactions. George brought MRR a unique blend of skills and 25 years of extensive experience in insurance and business law representing insurance agencies, agents/brokers, and insurance companies, as well as business owners, small and medium size businesses, and even Fortune 500 companies in a wide variety of transactions and litigation.

INSURANCE AGENTS AND BROKERS ERRORS AND OMISSIONS

A substantial part of George's practice over the past 20 years has focused on the insurance industry, with a large portion of that work devoted to matters involving insurance agencies, agents, and brokers. George has done significant work in the area of agent errors & omissions (E&O) coverage and litigation, primarily for a major national E&O carrier. Most of George's E&O work has been defending agents in E&O lawsuits, but he has also prosecuted suits for the carrier for subrogation, contribution, or indemnity. George's varied practice also includes coverage analyses for the E&O carrier and related litigation.

OTHER REPRESENTATION OF INSURANCE AGENCIES, AGENTS, AND BROKERS

George has represented dozens of insurance agents and agencies on many non-E&O matters. For example: forming businesses or arranging cluster agencies, drafting operating, close corporation, and buy-sell agreements, mergers, sales, and acquisitions of agencies and books of business, drafting purchase options, rights of first refusal, and account ownership agreements, producer/solicitor agreements, non-solicitation and confidentiality agreements, separation of partners, agents, and clusters, disputes with captive carriers and producers, evaluating and preparing agency procedure and employment manuals, advising on compliance issues under state insurance law, representation in administrative



Reply to:

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proceedings before the Ohio Department of Insurance, consultation and guidance regarding compliance with insurance regulations and in proceedings by the ODI on license suspension/revocation cases.

INVOLVEMENT WITH THE INSURANCE BOARD OF NORTHERN OHIO AND OTHER INSURANCE GROUPS

George is active in the IBNO since its inception in 2001, including serving as its counsel, and has worked on projects with the local CPCU Chapter and NEOHUA for their annual conventions. George worked with the Professional Insurance Agents National office to analyze and report on Ohio's E&O claims activity, and consults with them on issues for member agents.

INSURANCE COVERAGE WORK

George also has significant experience in other areas of insurance law, including coverage analysis and litigation. This work has involved matters for business and corporate clients as well as several national and regional insurance companies.

COMMERCIAL/BUSINESS LITIGATION

George has handled an extensive variety of commercial and business litigation in state and federal courts in Ohio and around the country. The disputes have included breach of contract, breach of non-competition, non-circumvention, and confidentiality agreements, theft of trade secrets, commercial collections and executions (across Ohio and enforcing judgments in other states), construction litigation, creditor's rights, and partnership/LLC disputes. These matters have ranged from small collections cases in Cleveland to multi-million dollar litigation with scores of defendants in federal court in Nevada and Florida.

COMMERCIAL TRANSACTIONS

George has been involved in a wide range of commercial transactions negotiating, analyzing, and drafting all forms of commercial financing documents, non-competition/non-solicitation agreements, confidentiality and non-circumvention agreements, manufacturing, sales, and service agreements, employment contracts, and asset and stock purchase/sale agreements. He has formed corporations, partnerships, and limited liability companies including all organizational and operational documents. George has also advised clients and drafted commercial and residential real estate purchase agreements, leases, and easements.

EMPLOYMENT LITIGATION AND COUNSELING

George has defended employers in employment discrimination claims in state and federal courts and administrative agencies, defended against

worker's compensation claims in the Industrial Commission and Common Pleas Court, and represented employers in wage and hour disputes with the Department of Labor. George has pursued claims against former employees for theft of trade secrets and violation of non-competition or non-solicitation agreements. George's practice includes counseling and working with employers to create employee manuals and employment guidelines, advising on employee hiring and termination, and negotiating and drafting employment contracts and non-competition/non-solicitation agreements.

BAR ADMISSIONS

- Ohio,
- U.S. District Court Northern District of Ohio
- U.S. Court of Appeals: 6th Circuit, 7th Circuit, and Federal Circuit
- *Pro Hac Vice* admission to U.S. District Courts in California, Delaware, Florida, Michigan, New York, Nevada, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Texas, and Wisconsin

EDUCATION

- Case Western Reserve University School of Law, J.D. – 1987
- Ohio Wesleyan University, B.A. – 1984

INDUSTRY AWARDS

- “Friend of the Insurance Industry” – Insurance Board of Northern Ohio – May, 2013

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

- Cleveland Metropolitan Bar Association (including Insurance Law Section)
- Insurance Board of Northern Ohio (including I-Day Convention Committee)

PRESENTATIONS

George has made numerous presentations to insurance and legal groups at agent meetings, conventions, and seminars on a wide variety of legal and business topics.

- “Trends in Agent E&O Cases” – Cuyahoga County Insurance Board – January 2000
- “Trends in Agent E&O Cases - 2003 Update” – Insurance Board of Northern Ohio - November 2003

- Panelist – Executive Roundtable – Insurance Board of Northern Ohio’s Cleveland I-Day Convention - May 2005
- “Legal Issues for Claims Representatives” – Cleveland Claims Association – October 2005
- Mock Trial on employment discrimination claim – Annual “Education Day” of the Cleveland Chapter of CPCU Society – November 2005
- Mock Trial on employment discrimination claim – Annual Convention of the Northeast Ohio Health Underwriters Association – March 2006
- Panelist for mock coverage interview with an agent and business client - Annual “Education Day” of the Cleveland Chapter of CPCU Society – November 2006
- Mock Trial on insurance agent E&O claim – Insurance Board of Northern Ohio’s Cleveland I-Day Convention – May 2007
- “Is Your Agency Responsible” – Insurance Board of Northern Ohio – July 2008
- “E&O Traps, or Marketing Opportunities, or Both?” – Erie Insurance Co. Agents – September 2011
- “Buying and Selling Agencies 101” - Insurance Board of Northern Ohio – May 2012
- “Agent/Broker Liability” – Anatomy of a Complex Professional Liability Claim – Cleveland Metropolitan Bar Association April 2013
- Panelist – “Winning Strategies for Coverage Litigation” – Anatomy of a Complex Professional Liability Claim – Cleveland Metropolitan Bar Association April 2013