

# Drinker Biddle

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## *Obituary*

### **Robert J. Waters, 55, Partner; Nationally Recognized Health Government Relations Lawyer**

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Robert J. Waters, 55, a partner at Drinker Biddle & Reath LLP in Washington, D.C., and one of the nation's foremost authorities on health government relations, e-health, telehealth and medical simulation, died October 27, 2010, after a courageous 21-month battle with brain cancer.

Waters joined Drinker Biddle's Washington, D.C., office in 2004 and served as chair of the firm's Government & Regulatory Affairs Practice Group until recently. His practice was focused primarily on legislative matters, with an emphasis on budget, appropriations and regulatory issues. He was a nationally recognized authority in e-health, telemedicine and health information services, representing clients in the health care and educational arenas, including telehealth and remote monitoring providers, medical simulation training organizations, and many nonprofit associations of national prominence. Waters was responsible for the creation of the Center for Telehealth and e-Health Law (CTeL), a national legal and regulatory telehealth and e-health organization, and the Advanced Initiative for Medical Simulation (AIMS), an organization dedicated to promoting medical simulation as a way to improve health care. He served as general counsel for both organizations.

Waters was a member of the American Health Lawyers Association, the District of Columbia Bar Association and the American Telemedicine Association. He was inducted into the American Telemedicine Association's College of Fellows and also was a recipient of a Special Recognition Award from the National Council of State Nursing Boards in 2004 for work on the creation of the Interstate Nurse Licensure Compact. In June 2009, he received the William N. Reich Outstanding Achievement Award from the American Association of Bioanalysts and the National Independent Laboratory Association.

Waters built a life and career founded on serving both the public good and his clients. He earned his bachelor's degree from Iowa State University in 1977 and then received an M.P.A. at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government in 1979. He began his career in Washington, D.C., as a policy and budget analyst in the Office of the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services, where he was responsible for advising the secretary on a wide range of health, welfare and social policy issues. In 1980, he received the Secretary's Award for Exceptional Achievement.

In 1983, Waters became chief of staff for then-Rep. Tom Harkin (D-Iowa), and was Harkin's first chief in the U.S. Senate, serving in that role from 1984 to 1987. Harkin was an active member of the Senate's Appropriations, Labor and Human Resources, and Agriculture Committees, and Waters advised the senator on a broad range of health, education, job training and employment issues. During his tenure on Capitol Hill, Waters also earned his law degree from Georgetown

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University's part-time evening program. In 1987, he joined Arent Fox LLP, where he became a partner and served as chair of the firm's Federal Practice Group and as a member of the executive committee.

"We were honored to know and work with a man like Bob," said Alfred W. Putnam, Jr., chairman of Drinker Biddle. "He was a gentle, intelligent and entertaining colleague – the best of company. His passion, wit, intellect and commitment will be missed by many people and institutions, including our firm and the clients he served so well."

Waters grew up in Carroll, Iowa and his father owned a women's ready-to-wear clothing store. He was fond of telling colleagues that he learned a significant amount about client service from watching his father run his small business. Married to his college sweetheart, who he met working on a political campaign, Waters was devoted to his family, and they traveled together extensively both abroad and around the country. In addition to hiking, golf and woodworking, Waters' other passion was public service and Democratic politics, and he kept close contacts with family and friends in his home state of Iowa.

Waters is survived by Patricia J. Beneke, his wife of 25 years, and their daughters Laura Waters, 22, and Kathleen Waters, 19, as well as a brother John Waters of Des Moines, Iowa, a brother James Waters of Peoria, Illinois, a sister Mary Ann Waters of Richmond, Virginia, a sister Catherine Mielk of Ankeny, Iowa, and seven nieces and nephews.

In lieu of flowers, the family suggests that memorial gifts can be made to: The Preston Robert Tisch Brain Tumor Center at Duke (c/o Ellen P. Stainback, Box 3624 DUMC, Durham, NC 27710); The Iowa State University Foundation – Robert J. Waters Memorial Fund (2505 University Blvd., Ames, IA 50010); or St. Peter's Episcopal Church (4250 N. Glebe Road, Arlington, VA 22207).

Services for Waters will be held on Tuesday, November 2, at 10:30 a.m. at St. Peter's Episcopal Church, 4250 N. Glebe Road, Arlington, VA 22207. A reception will follow immediately at the Washington Golf and Country Club, 3017 N. Glebe Road, Arlington, VA 22207. A memorial reception to celebrate Bob's life co-hosted by the family and Drinker Biddle will be held on Tuesday, November 16, from 5-7pm at The Phoenix Park Hotel, 520 North Capitol Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20001.

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*Drinker Biddle & Reath LLP is a national law firm with 650 lawyers in 11 offices providing client service in areas such as government and regulatory affairs, corporate and securities, corporate restructuring, investment management, health care, real estate, environment and energy, employee benefits and executive compensation, commercial litigation, life insurance and annuities, insurance coverage, labor and employment, intellectual property, communications litigation, products liability and mass tort litigation, and private client services.*