



BANKRUPTCY BUZZ

LOCAL NEWS AND INFORMATION

UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF FLORIDA

DECEMBER 2016

JUDGE LAUREL MYERSON ISICOFF APPOINTED CHIEF JUDGE EFFECTIVE OCTOBER 1, 2016

BY: DAWN LEONARD

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As children, we often aspire to emulate what we most admire in those who are closest to us. They make an impression on our lives, and we want to follow their examples. Judge Laurel Myerson Isicoff is no exception. From a very young age, even before Judge Isicoff knew that he was a lawyer, she knew that she wanted to be just like her grandfather. She wanted to follow in his footsteps, no matter where that path would lead. And thanks to her grandfather’s guiding footsteps, Judge Isicoff set off on a new turn on that path, which led to her earning a place in history as not only the first female Bankruptcy Judge in the Southern District, but now also, effective October 1, 2016, as the first female Chief Bankruptcy Judge in this District.

Judge Isicoff is one of 123 female judges out of a total of 392 bankruptcy judges in the federal courts across the country. That number represents approximately 31% of all seated federal bankruptcy judges. Judge Isicoff proudly conveys that female representation on the bankruptcy bench in the 11th Circuit has grown in the last several years, with the most recent appointments being women. Although the number of women in the judiciary has increased over the past decade, the numbers are still far lower than one would expect when considering the impact that women have made on the legal profession over that same period of time.

Being a woman in a largely male dominated profession has not hampered Judge Isicoff’s achievements or aspirations in any way. In fact, Judge Isicoff credits much of her success to the support and mentoring of her male counterparts. The Honorable Daniel S. Pearson, an appellate court judge for the Florida Third District Court of Appeals, was one of Judge Isicoff’s most avid supporters and mentors. She clerked for him after graduating law school and maintained contact up until his death in 2003.

Another of her mentors, Chris Meyer, whom she met while working at Squire Sanders & Dempsey, helped her find her passion in bankruptcy. As a partner in the firm, he asked the new attorney Isicoff to work with him on a chapter 11 bankruptcy. It was then that she realized that she wanted to pursue this unique and specialized area of law.

It was during her 14-year career at Kozyak Tropin & Throckmorton where Judge Isicoff was able to really focus on her other passion which is pro bono work. Although she specialized in commercial bankruptcy, she found that she enjoyed the “consumer side of things” and wanted to “help people who were trying to help

Bankruptcy Cases Filed From 1/1/15 to 9/30/16:

Total Filed: 16,029

- Chapter 7 : 8,335
- Chapter 9 : 0
- Chapter 11 : 210
- Chapter 12 : 1
- Chapter 13 : 7,470
- Chapter 15 : 13

Additional filing statistics are available on the court website www.flsb.uscourts.gov under the “Court Information” tab at the top of page.

Select: “[Bankruptcy Case Filing Statistics](#)”

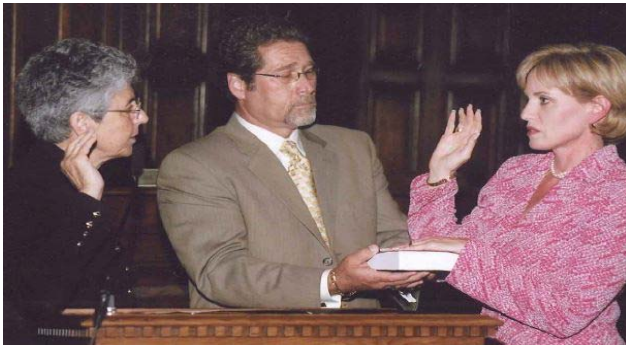
(continued on page 2)



Judge Laurel Myerson Isicoff Appointed Chief Judge (continued from page 1)

Themselves.” She taught clinics, classes, and mentored new lawyers at the Bankruptcy Assistance Clinic at St. Thomas Law School and at the University of Miami School Law Bankruptcy Clinic. She became active in the CARE program that is presented in high schools and colleges across the county which educates young people on financial literacy. During this time, she served as the Chair of the Pro Bono Task Force for the BBA, setting in motion a program that would later become a joint effort between the bar and the court to vastly improve pro bono and pro se programs in the Southern District. At Kozyak, Tropin & Throckmorton, Judge Isicoff enjoyed the mentorship and tutelage of two preeminent bankruptcy practitioners – her law partners John Kozyak and Chuck Throckmorton. The firm also supported her choice to work and to raise a family. She worked part-time while raising her young children. Judge Isicoff says that, “Even though you’re only getting paid for part time, you still need to get the job done.” With the love and encouragement of her most important support structure, her husband Steven, she was able to do just that.

On February 13, 2006, Laurel Myerson Isicoff took the oath of office of bankruptcy judge for the Southern District of Florida. For this moment, the pinnacle of her career, she wore the gifted robe of her mentor Judge Pearson. It was with reverence that she recited the oath, before her friends and family, forging a new turn on the path that she started so many years before. Her choice to be like her grandfather was rewarding her with greater opportunities to make a difference in people’s lives and to give back to the community.



Judge Rosemary Barkett, Steven Isicoff and Judge Isicoff as she takes the oath of office of bankruptcy judge for the Southern District of Florida on February 13, 2006.



Judge Isicoff with her husband Steven, daughter Alison and son Daniel on February 13, 2006.

Over the 10 years since her investiture, Judge Isicoff has met with challenges, been the subject of a news article or two, authored multiple opinions and has overseen thousands of cases. Today, she can proudly state that she loves being a bankruptcy judge. Her fellow judges, her “guys” as she likes to call them, have welcomed her with well-earned respect and admiration. They are a team. Together, all of our judges in the Southern District, strive “every day to do good.” Judge Isicoff says with pride, “The bankruptcy bench is the best bench in the world”.

As Chief Judge, Laurel Myerson Isicoff will endeavor to provide the same strong leadership set forth by each Chief Judge that came before her. She will strive to maintain the current structure of the court by working closely with judges across the districts to encourage the Judicial Conference and Congress to extend or make permanent the 2 temporary judgeships created in 2005 under BAPCPA. In addition, Judge Isicoff will work with our clerk, Joe Falzone, and his staff, to completely revamp the court website by making it a better resource for all. Finally, Judge Isicoff hopes to continue expanding and improving upon the pro se and pro bono programs in the Southern District.

“Bankruptcy works best when people are collaborative,” says Judge Isicoff. With the collaborative effort of our judges, the Clerk of the Court, court staff, and the bar, this district will continue to be one in which we are all proud to be a part.



CHIEF JUDGE GAVEL PASSES TO JUDGE ISICOFF IN DISTRICT COURT CEREMONY

By: Dawn Leonard

Although the provenance of the gavel is somewhat of a mystery, it can be traced back centuries having called to order meetings of esteemed organizations and courts of law. Today, it occupies an honored place on judicial benches in every American courtroom. Despite its simplicity of form, the gavel has come to represent more than just a tool. It is a symbol of order, authority, and a force of conscience.

So when on October 20, 2016, the Honorable Paul G. Hyman, Chief Judge of the U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the Southern District of Florida, passed the judicial gavel to the Honorable Laurel M. Isicoff, it was not only a commission of leadership and authority, but the entrustment of a succession of tenets and ideals that have been held by each predecessor.

The ceremony was hosted by The United States District Court for the Southern District of Florida, in the courtroom of the Honorable Federico A. Moreno. Members of the Bankruptcy Bar Association, the Office of the U.S. Trustee, all bankruptcy judges for the Southern District, and several District Court judges for the Southern District were in attendance. Chief U.S. District Judge, K. Michael Moore, presented the opening remarks.



Judge Hyman passing the judicial gavel to Judge Isicoff

Joseph Falzone, Clerk of the Bankruptcy Court for the Southern District, served as the master of ceremonies. The speakers for the evening included Bankruptcy Bar Association President Ido Alexander, Patricia Redmond, Esq., Judge Hyman's son Zachary Hyman, Esq., and Chief U.S. Bankruptcy Judge Emeritus A. Jay Cristol. All expressed their admiration and appreciation for Judge Hyman and Judge Isicoff by paying tribute to their accomplishments, benevolence as teachers, and collaboration as colleagues.

Judge Hyman followed with a heartfelt observance of the judges, court staff, attorneys, family and friends, with whom he credited his extraordinary success as chief judge. Having held the position for 10 years, longer than any other chief judge in the district, Judge Hyman navigated the court through many challenges. Through it all, he maintained a sense of stability for the court and its patrons, which translated into calm assurance and order despite many obstacles.

Newly appointed Chief Judge Laurel M. Isicoff concluded the evening of speeches. Poised and amiable, the woman of the hour addressed the room as if she was speaking to each person individually and to a group of old friends.

The ceremony was followed by food, drinks and lively conversation.

Judge Isicoff is certainly making her mark in history, as the first female Bankruptcy Judge in South Florida, and now as the first female **Chief** Bankruptcy Judge.



PRO BONO 2016 IN THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF FLORIDA IT ISN'T JUST A WEEK

By: Chief Judge Laurel Myerson Isicoff

During the last week of October, the Bankruptcy Court and the Bankruptcy Bar Association of the Southern District of Florida once again joined forces with the District Court and the Federal Bar Associations of the Southern District of Florida, Broward and Palm Beach to celebrate Pro Bono Week 2016. The full week culminated in a Volunteer Recognition Ceremony at the District Court.

But as you all know, pro bono happens all year round in the Southern District of Florida, and this year has been especially exciting. In January of this year I was joined by approximately 50 stakeholders at a Pro Bono Summit. Berger Singerman graciously lent video conference facilities so that those interested could join in “live” from Boca Raton, Fort Lauderdale and Miami. We also had several participants join by phone. The eight task forces that were formed after that Summit spent almost the entire Spring and Summer putting together reports and recommendations on their various topics.* Already we have seen results from their efforts:

- All pro se debtors receive a court form with information regarding pro bono legal service providers throughout the nine counties of the Southern District of Florida.
- Lawyers who voluntarily take pro bono cases or mentor other lawyers who take those cases will receive up to three credits during a three-year reporting period for bankruptcy CLE required by our Local Rule 2090-1. **
- We have adopted a low bono program – parties who do not meet the poverty guideline thresholds will still be able to obtain services at a reduced cost in chapter 7 and chapter 13 (WE NEED VOLUNTEER LAWYERS . . .).
- Our pro se clinic information now includes clinic information for Martin County as well as other rural counties.

We also have more exciting developments coming down the pike:

- Our court website is being completely revamped and information on pro bono resources, pro bono opportunities, and resources for self-represented parties, will be easily accessible.
- There will be a handbook that will be distributed to all volunteer attorneys, making navigation of certain “tricks of the free legal services trade” more understandable.
- We are continuing to improve existing programs.

And FINALLY, for now, I announced at the Passing of the Gavel event that I am instituting a Bankruptcy Chief Judge’s Pro Bono Award, which will recognize the achievements of many of our pro bono volunteers but also will single out one outstanding volunteer every year. The criteria for the reward is being developed and will be modeled on the Florida Supreme Court’s Chief Justice Award.

We aren’t done yet and the Pro Bono Task Force is dedicated to continuing to improve delivery of pro bono services in the Southern District of Florida. There is an access to justice crisis in Florida, but we can take care of our corner of the world. I look forward to working with all of you to fix that crisis.

Happy holidays.

*For additional information on the Task Forces, please see the May 2016 Bankruptcy Buzz issue.

**See Administrative Order 16-05 “Adoption of Interim Local Rule 2090-1”.



Introducing SmartScan

By: Jacqueline Antillon

SmartScan, an electronic document delivery service from the National Archives and Records Administration's (NARA) Federal Records Center (FRC) is now available in this court. SmartScan is an alternative to viewing records at the FRC or having boxes of records shipped from the FRC to the court for viewing. SmartScan allows members of the public to request electronic delivery of a limited number of scanned pages in high quality Adobe PDF (Portable Document Format). SmartScan eliminates shipping costs, reduces clerk's office staff time required to receive, duplicate, and distribute documents, and is ideal for small and/or urgent requests.

When should you use SmartScan?

SmartScan may be used if you know exactly what documents you wish to obtain (e.g., discharge order, final decree). Requested documents cannot exceed 100 electronic pages and the outbound email attachment cannot exceed 5MB size limit. Additionally, requests **cannot** include sealed and/or restricted documents nor documents that have been accessioned by NARA.

How do you request SmartScan Service?

For available methods and instruction on our document retrieval process, please see "Clerk's Instructions for Obtaining Copies of Court Records" on our court website. Requests can be made in person, by mail or via email to any Clerk's Office Division. Staff will review all requests made for the retrieval of documents/files on Local Form "Archives Request" and determine if the request complies with the SmartScan requirements. If the retrieval is available through this service, court staff will contact the party offering the option of this service and its applicable fee. If this service is not applicable, staff will process the request through the regular file/box retrieval method.

How much does SmartScan cost?

The Judicial Conference established the following SmartScan fees per document:

Judiciary administrative fee - \$10.00
FRC fee to pull and refile paper records - \$9.90
FRC fee per PDF page - \$.65

Payment must be remitted to the court in the form of check or cash prior to the transmission of the document.

When will I receive my SmartScan documents?

Most SmartScan requests received in the clerk's office by 9:00 a.m. will be emailed to you by 4:00 p.m. the next business day or as soon as payment is remitted to the court. In order to receive your documents, you will need a computer with internet access and an email account. In addition, to view the PDF, you will need Adobe Acrobat Reader which can be downloaded for free at www.adobe.com.





AMENDING FEE-BASED DOCUMENTS

By Lorraine Adam

E-filers may amend fee-based documents without incurring an additional charge by selecting one of the following events: Amended Document -or- Amended Motion. Each event allows the e-filer to link to the prior fee-based entry being amended. *Important note:* A motion that has been ruled upon may not be amended → a new motion and fee may be required.

To amend documents indicated below, the following instructions apply:

When amending a petition, the Amended Document event should be used and linked to the first entry. However, this event should not be used when filing amended schedules. The dedicated event for amending schedules requires the e-filer to answer prompts and, when necessary, pay the filing fee.

When amending a multi-part motion where one event is fee-based and the other is not, the amended docket entry should remain multi-part. For example, to amend a Motion for Relief from Stay and/or Adequate Protection, the e-filer should use the following multiple events: Amended Motion and Adequate Protection.

For all non-fee based amended filings, the dedicated event should be used and the docket text edited to reflect "Amended." This is important since dedicated events provide an accurate docket entry and update behind-the-scenes information.

Below are the two amended events along with a list of the fee-based events appropriate for each use:

Amended Document [Other menu]

- ✓ Petition (only, not the schedules)
- ✓ Notice of Appeal
- ✓ Notice of Removal
- ✓ Notice of Transfer of Claim

Amended Motion [Motions menu]

- ✓ Motion to Convert (those that require a fee)
- ✓ Motion to Split Cases
- ✓ Motion to Appear Pro Hac Vice
- ✓ Motion to Redact
- ✓ Motion to Compel Abandonment
- ✓ Motion for Leave to File an Appeal
- ✓ Motion for Relief From Stay
- ✓ Motion to Withdraw the Reference of a Case
- ✓ Motions to Sell Free and Clear (§363(f))



CM/ECF PDF FILE SIZE LIMITATION INCREASED TO 50MB

Effective December 1, 2016, the Bankruptcy Court for the Southern District of Florida will increase the data byte file size limit from 10MB to 50MB. Over the last 20 years, PDF size limit was restricted as a result of hardware and network limitations. However, advances in technology have significantly improved the capacity of both hardware and network speeds. Increasing the PDF file size to 50MB will virtually eliminate the need to split PDF documents into separate images.



US BANKRUPTCY COURT, SDFL RECENT ORDERS ENTERED FOR ACCESS TO THESE ORDERS VISIT www.flsb.uscourts.gov

| | |
|------------|--|
| GO 2016-01 | “Order Adopting 2016 Holiday Closing Schedule of United States District Court, SDFL” |
| AO 2016-07 | “Adoption of Modified Provisions Authorizing and Implementing Court Registry Investment System (“CRIS”) Previously Adopted Under AO 2016-03” |
| AO 2016-06 | “Adoption of Interim Local Rules 1010-1 and 3070-1” |
| AO 2016-05 | “Adoption of Interim Local Rule 2090-1” |
| AO 2016-04 | “Implementation of Debtor Electronic Bankruptcy Noticing (DeBN) Program and Adoption of Related Interim Local Rules” |
| AO 2016-03 | “Authorization and Implementation of Court Registry Investment System (“CRIS”) “ |
| AO 2016-02 | “Adoption of Interim Local Rule 1019-1” |
| AO 2016-01 | “Electronic Cigarette Policy and Adoption of Interim Local Rule 5072-2(B)” |

MISCELLANEOUS FEE SCHEDULES AMENDED EFFECTIVE DECEMBER 1, 2016

The Judicial Conference approved inflationary adjustments to fees on the appellate, district, and bankruptcy court miscellaneous fee schedules, as well as on the Court of Federal Claims and the Judicial Panel on Multidistrict Litigation miscellaneous fee schedules. The Conference also approved changes to the district and bankruptcy court miscellaneous fee schedules to simplify fees for court registry funds invested through the Judiciary’s Court Registry Investment System (CRIS). These changes were effective December 1, 2016.

As a result of changes to the fees for court registry funds, this court’s Administrative Order 16-03 “Authorization and Implementation of Court Registry Investment System (“CRIS”) as Sole Mechanism for Deposit and Investment of Registry Funds and Adoption of Interim Local Rule 7067-1” has been modified by Administrative Order AO 16-07 “Adoption of Modified Provisions Authorizing and Implementing Court Registry Investment System (“CRIS”) Previously Adopted Under AO 2016-03”.

The revised Miscellaneous Fee Schedules are available at: <http://www.uscourts.gov/services-forms/fees/bankruptcy-court-miscellaneous-fee-schedule>

FEDERAL RULES AMENDMENTS EFFECTIVE DECEMBER 1, 2016

On April 28, 2016, the Supreme Court adopted changes to the Federal Rules of Appellate, Civil, Criminal, and Bankruptcy Procedures which took effect on December 1, 2016.

Information on the changes to bankruptcy rules and forms can be accessed on this US Courts webpage: <http://www.uscourts.gov/rules-policies/pending-rules-and-forms-amendments>

A complete package of the amended rules, (both clean and redline versions) with accompanying committee notes and excerpts from the Advisory Committee reports is available [here](#).

Please see also: AO 2016-06 “Adoption of Interim Local Rules 1010-1 and 3070-1” and this court’s “Notice of Entry of AO 2016-05, AO 2016-06, and AO 2016-07”



Chapter 7 or Chapter 13 – You Decide!

By Lorraine Adam

Read each statement below and circle the appropriate chapter being described.

| | | |
|-----|--|-----------------|
| 1. | Upon meeting certain criteria, the <i>in forma pauperis</i> designation may apply to allow waiver of the case filing fee. | 7 -or- 13 |
| 2. | This chapter is a voluntary repayment plan for individuals with regular income. | 7 -or- 13 |
| 3. | A corporation has no business filing under this chapter. | 7 -or- 13 |
| 4. | The Means Test may not apply at the time of filing this chapter because of qualified military service, but it could apply later. | 7 -or- 13 |
| 5. | A debtor in this chapter, who is not self-employed, must submit a proposed Local Form "Agreed Order to Employer to Deduct and Remit and for Related Mattes" to the court prior to the meeting of creditors | 7 -or- 13 |
| 6. | This chapter has the authority to limit service for certain notices | 7 -or- 13 |
| 7. | The filing fee for both chapters include an administrative fee, but this chapter also includes a trustee surcharge fee. | 7 -or- 13 |
| 8. | The local form "Rights and Responsibilities Agreement" must be entered into between the attorney and debtor for this chapter, but it is not filed with the court. | 7 -or- 13 |
| 9. | An involuntary petition may be filed against the debtor under this chapter. | 7 -or- 13 |
| 10. | The debtor filing this chapter is required to disclose in the petition whether or not the filing is an abuse. | 7 -or- 13 |

Answer Key: 1-Ch 7; 2-Ch 13; 3-Ch 13; 4-Ch 7; 5-Ch 13; 6-Ch 7; 7-Ch 7; 8-Ch 13; 9-Ch 7; 10-Ch 7



FREE BANKRUPTCY CLINICS

FREE PRO SE CLINICS AVAILABLE AT THE LOCATIONS AND TIMES BELOW! Each clinic features a 45 minute video providing an overview of the procedures for filing bankruptcy, followed by Question & Answer Sessions staffed by pro bono attorneys who are available to give general advice on bankruptcy matters. They do **NOT** represent you and do **NOT** provide you with legal advice regarding your particular circumstances. You are responsible for responding to any pleadings and for protecting your own legal rights. This is a **FREE** service and the attorneys are not there to attempt to acquire you as clients, or to ask you to pay them for advice or future services.

SPONSORED BY: Dade Legal Aid Put Something Back Pro Bono Project, Legal Aid Society of Palm Beach, Inc., Florida Rural Legal Services, Inc. , The American College of Bankruptcy Foundation & The Bankruptcy Bar Association of the Southern District of Florida

***BANKRUPTCY COURT – MIAMI DIVISION: 301 NORTH MIAMI AVENUE, TRAINING ROOM**

Each session will be held on a Friday from 12 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. on the following dates

| | | |
|------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| December 9, 2016 | January 13, 2017 | February 10, 2017 |
| March 10, 2017 | April 21, 2017 | May 12, 2017 |

***BANKRUPTCY COURT - FORT LAUDERDALE DIVISION: 299 EAST BROWARD BOULEVARD, ROOM 112**

Each session will be held on a Friday from 12 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. on the following dates

| | | |
|------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| December 9, 2016 | January 13, 2017 | February 10, 2017 |
| March 10, 2017 | April 14, 2017 | May 12, 2017 |

***BANKRUPTCY COURT - WEST PALM BEACH DIVISION: 1515 NORTH FLAGLER DRIVE,
8TH FLOOR IN DESIGNATED COURTROOM**

Courtroom B: Wednesday, December 21, 2016 12 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Courtroom A: The following 2017 sessions will be held in on Wednesdays from 12 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.

| | | | | |
|------------|------------|---------|---------|--------|
| January 11 | February 8 | March 8 | April 5 | May 17 |
|------------|------------|---------|---------|--------|

STUART/PORT SAINT LUCIE/INDIAN RIVER: PETER & JULIE CUMMINGS LIBRARY, DETERLIZZI ROOM; 2551 MATHESON AVENUE, PALM CITY, FL 34990 “Sponsored by Martin County Bankruptcy Committee and Martin County Library System’s “Lawyers in the Library” Program – For information call 772-419-0057”.

The following 2017 sessions are on Thursdays from 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.:

| | | | | |
|------------|-------------|----------|----------|--------|
| January 19 | February 16 | March 16 | April 20 | May 18 |
|------------|-------------|----------|----------|--------|

VERO BEACH: For information or to register please call Florida Rural Legal Services at 772-466-4766 ext. 7014

The following 2017 sessions are on Tuesdays from 11:00 a.m.—1:00 p.m.

| | | | | |
|-----------|------------|---------|---------|-------|
| January 3 | February 7 | March 7 | April 4 | May 2 |
|-----------|------------|---------|---------|-------|

PORT SAINT LUCIE: For information or to register please call Florida Rural Legal Services at 772-466-4766 ext. 7014

The following 2017 sessions are on Tuesdays from 3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.:

| | | | | |
|-----------|------------|---------|---------|-------|
| January 3 | February 7 | March 7 | April 4 | May 2 |
|-----------|------------|---------|---------|-------|

*You may **NOT** bring cell phones or electronic devices into the courthouse or you will be denied entry. Cell phones and electronic devices will not be stored for you.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

| | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------|
| Miami: | (Karen Ladis) | kladis@dadelegalaid.org |
| Fort Lauderdale: | (Kimberly Salamone) | ksalamone@ntmlawfirm.com |
| West Palm Beach: | (Rilyn Carnahan) | rilyn.carnahan@gmlaw.com |
| | (Steven S. Newburgh) | snewburgh@mclaughlinstern.com |
| Stuart/Port Saint Lucie: | (Jon Martin) | lmbklaw@gmail.com |
| Okeechobee/Indian River: | (Carolyn Fabrizio) | carolyn.fabrizio@frls.org |



THE BROWARD COUNTY CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION ANNOUNCES STEP FORWARD FOR NEW FEDERAL COURTHOUSE IN FORT LAUDERDALE

In a press release dated November 4, 2016, the Broward County Congressional Delegation announced that construction of a new federal courthouse for Broward County has taken a major step forward with a decision by the Judicial Conference of the United States ranking the Southern District of Florida's Fort Lauderdale federal courthouse third on the national Courthouse Project Priorities list. The release stated that the United States District Court for the Southern District of Florida is one of the largest federal judicial districts in the country, spanning 15,000 square miles and serving 6.3 million people from nine counties. In 2015, nearly 9,000 civil cases were filed in this district, making it one of the busiest jurisdictions in the country. Plagued by mold, chronic roof leaks, persistent flooding, and significant space constraints, the 40-year-old building lacks basic structural safeguards to protect judges and courtroom personnel. The press release is available at the following link:

<http://frankel.house.gov/news/documentsingle.aspx?DocumentID=510>

DECLINE IN NATIONAL BANKRUPTCY FILINGS SLOWING

For the third straight quarter, bankruptcy filings fell by less than 10 percent, with filings falling by 6.3 percent for the 12-month period ending September 30, 2016, compared with the year ending September 30, 2015. The three most recent reports follow a four-year period in which consecutive double-digit declines had occurred in every reporting period since December 2011. For more information see:

<http://www.uscourts.gov/news/2016/10/26/decline-bankruptcy-filings-slowing>

UPCOMING COURT HOLIDAY CLOSINGS

Christmas - Friday, December 23, 2016 court will close at 2:00 pm

Monday, December 26, 2016 court will be closed all day

New Year's Day - Monday, January 2, 2017

Birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr. - Monday, January 16, 2017

Washington's Birthday - Monday, February 20, 2017

Memorial Day - Monday, May 29, 2017

Independence Day - Tuesday, July 4, 2017

COURT MISSION STATEMENT

To promote public trust and confidence in the administration of bankruptcy cases:

- *through easy access to comprehensible, accurate information about the court, its procedures, and records;*
- *by the efficient, respectful, and dignified conduct of business at all levels of the court—clerk's office, chambers and courtroom;*
- *through adjudication of bankruptcy cases by a fair and impartial tribunal that is designed to provide relief to the honest debtor, equitable distribution of available assets to creditors, and preservation of jobs and value through successful business reorganizations.*

CONTACT BANKRUPTCY BUZZ PUBLICATION STAFF

If you have any comments regarding this issue or want to suggest ideas for future articles, please contact "Bankruptcy Buzz" staff at the following email address:

Debbie_Lewis@flsb.uscourts.gov.

Please do not use the above email address to file or send papers to the court or to ask questions about court procedure or status of a particular case. Contact the clerk's office at any of the following numbers for assistance in these matters.

Visit the court website www.flsb.uscourts.gov for local filing information.

Thank you.

Miami: (305) 714-1800

Ft. Lauderdale: (954) 769-5700

West Palm Beach: (561) 514-4100

Please Note:

Clerk's office staff is not permitted to give legal advice.