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Press Release

Akerman Adds Five Labor & Employment Lawyers in Five Weeks; Expands in Los Angeles, New York and Miami

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Firm Enhances Capabilities in Employment and Investor Immigration, Complex Litigation and Class/Collective Action Defense

Akerman LLP, a top 100 U.S. law firm serving clients across the Americas, has expanded the Labor & Employment Practice Group with five lawyers in five weeks, including partners Rachel Schumacher in Los Angeles and Maria "Marisa" Casablanca in Miami. They follow the addition of partners Bran Noonan, Sarir Silver and associate Vincent Avery in New York. The new lawyers enhance Akerman's core strengths in complex litigation and class/collective action defense on behalf of employers, and they bring significant experience in wage and hour issues. Together they also augment the firm's international reach for corporations and foreign investors in a range of immigration issues, including employment-based immigration and compliance, and the EB-5 Immigrant Investor Program.

"What you are seeing is evidence of a firm that is committed to hiring talented lawyers who will add immediate and significant value to our clients," said Eric Gordon, chair of the Labor & Employment Practice Group. "We are focused on deepening our experience in employment and immigration matters in major business centers like New York, Chicago,

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Maria I. Casablanca

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EB-5 Immigrant Investor Program

Immigration Planning and Compliance

Labor and Employment

Los Angeles and Miami. The expansion of our labor and employment team across markets furthers our ability to problem-solve on the ground with our clients and serve their interests nationally."

Rachel Schumacher
Schumacher focuses her litigation practice in the areas of labor and employment law. She represents employers in federal and state litigation matters, including class action and individual claims of wage and hour violations, sexual harassment, age, disability, race and sex discrimination, failure to accommodate, whistleblower and public policy wrongful discharge. Schumacher has extensive class action experience and focuses primarily on wage and hour class actions and collective actions, including Fair Labor Standards Act, meal and rest period, donning and doffing, vacation and regular rate of pay claims at the state and federal levels.

She also represents management in a variety of labor relations matters, including collective bargaining and unfair labor practice charges. Schumacher provides employers with day-to-day preventive counseling and strategic solutions in connection with hiring, promotion, disability accommodation and termination of their employees, as well as compliance with local state and federal employment laws. Her experience spans a variety of industries including transportation, retail, hospitality, private equity, start up business, and entertainment, among others.

Maria "Marisa" Casablanca
Casablanca is board certified in Immigration and Nationality Law by The Florida Bar and has dedicated herself to the practice for 25 years. She represents corporate clients and investors in obtaining assistance and benefits, such as employment visas (EB-5) as well as business related visas and residency for foreign nationals, representing family members of permanent residents and United States Citizens, and assisting those seeking asylum. She often advises employers

on compliance procedures and counsels individuals on how to maintain their status in the United States.

An experienced litigator, Casablanca is admitted to practice before the Supreme Court, the Immigration Court, the Board of Immigration Appeals, the Southern District Court and the Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals. She also has filed a petition for certiorari with the Supreme Court on an immigration issue that conflicted with different states. Casablanca is currently the Mexico City District Chapter Chair of the American Immigration Lawyers Association and the Vice Chair of the organization's Department of State Liaison Committee. She previously served on The Florida Bar's Certification Committee for Immigration and Nationality Law.

About Akerman LLP
Akerman LLP is a leading transactions and trial law firm known for its core strengths in middle market M&A, within the financial services and real estate industries, and for a diverse Latin America practice. With more than 600 lawyers and government affairs professionals and a network of 20 offices, it is ranked among the top 100 law firms in the United States by *The American Lawyer* (2016). Akerman also is ranked among the top 50 law firms for diversity in *The American Lawyer*'s Diversity Scorecard (2015).

Akerman's Labor & Employment Practice Group defends employers throughout the United States in all types of litigation under federal, state and local employment laws, including the Fair Labor Standards Act. Adept at class and collective actions defense, the group represents clients in connection with employment law compliance, collective bargaining and NLRB proceedings, ADA public access, global workforce issues, immigration and non-compete and trade secret advice and litigation.

Akerman also delivers important developments in labor and employment law on the firm's HR Defense

Blog.