

PRESS RELEASE

Linda A. Klein Named *Daily Report's* Attorney of the Year

July 11, 2018

Linda A. Klein, senior managing shareholder at Baker Donelson and immediate past president of the American Bar Association (ABA), has been recognized with the *Daily Report's* prestigious Attorney of the Year award.

Ms. Klein was honored during the 2018 Georgia Legal Awards hosted by the *Daily Report* on June 28 in Atlanta, Georgia. She was recognized for her work as president of the American Bar Association, including protecting access to justice and the rule of law.

During her term as president of the ABA, Ms. Klein was the national voice of the legal profession, defending justice and the rule of law during a tumultuous year. She spoke out on issues such as the independence of the judiciary, due process and access to justice. After the proposed federal budget eliminated funding for Legal Services Corp., the nation's largest provider of civil legal aid services, she demanded funding of the LSC in countless speeches and op-eds, and spearheaded a vast ABA campaign benefitting the LSC. When the Department of Education reneged on its Public Service Loan Forgiveness commitments, which forgives student loan debt for borrowers who work in non-profit sectors, Ms. Klein championed a lawsuit against the DOE to protect those who relied on the program.

As ABA president, Ms. Klein also focused on improving Access to Justice for veterans. She spearheaded the new [ABA Veterans' Legal Services Initiative](#), which created comprehensive online resources to address veterans' unique legal needs, and worked with law schools and bar associations to make legal services available using new and under-employed lawyers, and with VA medical facilities to promote legal check-ups for veterans. Her efforts raised awareness and increased pro bono services to veterans, their families and caregivers.

Before being chosen as ABA president-elect in 2015, Ms. Klein served as chair of the ABA's House of Delegates, the second-highest elected office in the organization, from 2010 to 2012. She has also served as chair of the Tort Trial and Insurance Practice Section, chair of the Committee on Rules and Calendar of the House of Delegates, chair of the Coalition for Justice and chair of ABA Day, the Association's Congressional outreach effort.

In June 1997, Ms. Klein became the first woman to serve as president of the State Bar of Georgia. During her term, she devised a proposal and advocated for the state to allocate funding for lawyers to help indigent victims of domestic violence. She organized a statewide group of community organizations and local and minority bar associations that together convinced the General Assembly to appropriate \$2 million. Since then, the annual appropriations have helped thousands in Georgia with legal issues related to domestic violence. Recently, the Judicial Council of Georgia Standing Committee on Grants announced the award of \$2.43 million to legal aid groups around the state for low-income victims of domestic violence and their children.

Ms. Klein was one of the first women to lead a prominent Georgia law firm. She served as managing partner of Gambrell & Stolz beginning in 2001 and led the firm's 2007 merger with Baker Donelson, becoming a Baker Donelson board member and Georgia managing shareholder.

In 2017, Ms. Klein was the recipient of the National Association of Women Judges Florence K. Murray Award. In 2009, she was honored with the Randolph Thrower Award for Lifetime Achievement and was named to the YWCA Academy of Women Achievers. In 2004, the ABA honored her with the prestigious Margaret Brent Achievement Award. Ms. Klein is listed in *The Best Lawyers in America*, *Who's Who in America* and *Chambers USA*. She is regularly named to the *Super Lawyers* top 100 lawyers in Georgia and among the top 50 female lawyers in Georgia by *Super Lawyers*. In 1998, *Georgia Trend Magazine* named her one of the 100 most powerful and influential Georgians.

Ms. Klein earned her J.D. at Washington & Lee Law School in Virginia and her B.A. at Union College in New York. Her practice includes most types of business dispute resolution, including contract law and professional liability, working extensively with clients in the construction, higher education and pharmaceutical industries.