

Partner Keith Gercken Joins Sheppard Mullin San Francisco

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Keith R. Gercken has joined the San Francisco office of Sheppard, Mullin, Richter & Hampton LLP as a partner. Gercken, most recently with Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman in San Francisco, is a member of the firm's Tax, Employee Benefits, Trusts and Estate Planning practice group.

Gercken's practice includes all areas of business income taxation, with emphasis on corporate and partnership taxation and international transactions. He advises corporate and individual clients on the U.S. federal and international tax consequences on a wide range of transactions, including taxable and tax-free mergers and acquisitions; partnerships and joint ventures; the formation and operation of equity funds; finance transactions; tax-free exchanges; international licensing; foreign operations (including cross-border joint ventures between U.S. and non-U.S. partners); and inbound investment into the United States by non-U.S. investors.

Guy Halgren, chairman of the firm, said, "Keith is a very accomplished tax attorney, and we are extremely pleased to welcome him to the firm. He brings nearly 20 years of experience from a variety of organizations, including Ernst & Young and private corporations. His tax specialty expertise in international trade, M&A and private equity, among others, adds a great deal of value to the service and counsel we bring to clients."

Commented Gercken, "Sheppard Mullin is a premier law firm. I look forward to expanding the firm's tax practice in San Francisco and working with my new Corporate colleagues in other offices. Joining a firm with a growing and successful transactional practice offers significant opportunity for my practice."

"We are thrilled to have Keith join us in San Francisco and continue the expansion we've experienced in the last month," said Betsy McDaniel, managing partner of the San Francisco office. "Keith is the third partner to join us in May, along with healthcare partner Maureen Corcoran and media defense litigator James Chadwick. The office, with more than 75 attorneys, now has greater depth and breadth in these three areas of specialization."

Gercken's recent representative matters include (i) representing Zions Bancorporation in connection with its \$1.7 billion acquisition of Amegy Bancorporation, (ii) representing Bank of the West in connection with its \$1.4 billion acquisition of Commercial Federal Bank, (iii) representing SICOR Inc. in connection with its \$3.4 billion acquisition by Teva Pharmaceutical Industries Ltd., (iv) representing Applied Molecular Evolution, Inc. in connection with its \$400 million acquisition by Eli Lilly and Company, (v) representing a large public pension fund in connection with the establishment and restructuring of numerous U.S. domestic and international real estate investment funds, (vi) advising a multinational telecommunications company in connection with several significant stock and asset acquisitions and dispositions in Latin America and Asia, (vii) representing a Hong Kong-based restaurant developer in connection with the formation of a worldwide joint venture, and (viii) representing a U.S.-based financial services company in connection with the partial sale and restructuring of its investment in a Puerto Rico electric generation facility.

Gercken graduated, *magna cum laude*, from University of California, Hastings College of the Law in 1987 and earned a B.A. from University of California at Berkeley in 1983.

About Sheppard, Mullin, Richter & Hampton LLP

Sheppard, Mullin, Richter & Hampton LLP is a full service AmLaw 100 firm with more than 480 attorneys in nine offices located throughout California and in New York and Washington, D.C. The firm's California offices are located in Los Angeles, San Francisco, Santa Barbara, Century City, Orange County, Del Mar Heights and San Diego. Sheppard Mullin provides legal expertise and counsel to U.S. and international clients in a wide range of practice areas, including Antitrust, Corporate and Securities; Entertainment, Media & Communications; Finance and Bankruptcy; Government Contracts; Intellectual Property; Labor and Employment; Litigation; Real Estate/ Land Use; Tax, Employee Benefits, Trusts and Estate Planning; and White Collar Defense. The firm was founded in 1927.