



Contact: Public Relations and Marketing
973-422-1100
info@becker.legal

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Joseph G. Harraka, Jr. Participates in Oral Argument before New Jersey Supreme Court on Issue of Premises Liability for Off-Premises Injuries

Cherry Hill, N.J., May 2016 – Joseph G. Harraka, Jr. Esq., a Senior Litigator and member at Becker LLC argued before the Supreme Court of New Jersey last week on behalf of the firm’s client Accuratus Corporation in the case entitled *Brenda Schwartz v. Accuratus, et al.* The case involves a novel question of law regarding the nature and extent of a landowner’s or employer’s liability for off-site injuries and the associated scope of duty. In an entertaining oral argument, the Court addressed an issue brought before it by way of a certified question from the Third Circuit Court of Appeals.

In March 2014, Eastern District Court of Pennsylvania Judge Jeffrey L. Schmehl determined that the rule of “take-home” liability first adopted by the New Jersey Supreme Court in 2006 did not extend to cover either a non-spouse, non-connubial roommate or a non-cohabitating, unmarried romantic partner and dismissed a negligence claim brought by Brenda Schwartz against Accuratus Corporation. In June 2015, after a full briefing of the issues by the parties and after oral argument was conducted, the Third Circuit Court of Appeals petitioned this Court for certification of the following question; – “Does the premises liability rule set forth in *Olivo v. Owens-Illinois, Inc.*, 895 A.2d 1143 (N.J. 2006), extend beyond providing a duty of care to the spouse of a person exposed to toxic substances on the landowner’s premises, and, if so, what are the limits on that liability rule and the associated scope of duty?” In July 2015, the New Jersey Supreme Court accepted the certified question presented to it by the Third Circuit Court of Appeals. The parties’ briefing before the New Jersey Supreme Court took place during the Fall of 2015 and oral argument was conducted before the Court on April 25, 2016.

Mr. Harraka stated “It truly was an honor to have argued before the highest court of this State on behalf of one of the firm’s clients on such an interesting legal issue. All of the Justices were well prepared and asked pointed and insightful questions during oral argument of both me and opposing counsel. Thankfully, given the great team effort and support that I got from David Tomeo, Wes Bridges, and Christine Restrepo on the briefs our firm filed and in preparation for oral argument, I believe that I was able to competently answer such questions. I greatly appreciated the opportunity to participate in such a professionally rewarding experience and look forward to the issuance of the Court’s opinion.”

* * * * *

About Becker LLC

Becker LLC is a premier mid-market firm serving the New York, New Jersey and Philadelphia corridor. The Firm provides the complete spectrum of legal services from litigation, transactional, labor and employment, and bankruptcy law counseling, to intellectual property, real estate and construction law-related advice. Our size and regional footprint allows us to provide sophisticated services in a manner not only focused on results, but also on our client’s return on their investment. For more information, call (973) 422-1100, or visit www.becker.legal