

Farrell Fritz opens Albany office just steps from the Capitol

Law firm expands with focus on regulatory and government relations

Farrell Fritz, the law firm headquartered in Uniondale, has launched a new practice group: regulatory and government relations.

Based in Albany, the new group's office is steps away from the Capitol and Legislative Office Building. That location is convenient for the group as it interacts with New York State legislators and regulators on behalf of the firm's clients.

Managing Partner Bob Creighton said the addition enables the firm to offer "vital areas of representation for our clients and to connect our clients directly with key decision makers in Albany."

He noted changing laws sometimes negatively impact clients through "unintended consequences." The new group would "seek to address the harm" on behalf of clients, and interact to direct help that would advance their business objectives.

Mark Ustin, a partner who is also a healthcare attorney and lobbyist with 25 years of expertise, is leading the new group. And while the team is largely concentrated in healthcare, Creighton said its abilities go "beyond the

THE NEW OFFICE ADVISES CLIENTS SEEKING REGULATORY OR LEGISLATIVE ASSISTANCE

healthcare space."

"Any client that has some need to seek regulatory or legislative assistance, we can help from our Albany office," he said.

When the firm looked to enhance its healthcare group, Creighton said Ustin, who started his career as an associate at Farrell Fritz, was an obvious choice.

The two collaborated recently during the affiliation between Winthrop University Hospital, which Creighton has represented in the past, and NYU Langone Medical Center. Winthrop needed a healthcare regulatory attorney, and Creighton immediately sought out Ustin.

"It became clear that the synergy of our existing healthcare practice with Mark's regulatory and government relations work would bring tremendous value to our clients in the future," Creighton said.

Aside from his work in the healthcare sphere, Ustin, formerly a partner at Manatt,



Photo courtesy of Farrell Fritz

BOB CREIGHTON, MARK USTIN, VANESSA BONGIORNO and DANIEL RUBIN offer Farrell Fritz clients new services with the firm's recently launched regulatory and government relations group.

Phelps & Phillips, a law firm headquartered in New York, "also had additional expertise that would be extremely valuable to our clients," Creighton said.

That expertise includes assisting healthcare entities across the nation tackle complex statutory, regulatory and policy aspects. In working with the state, Ustin enjoyed an earlier stint as assistant counsel to the governor for health, mental hygiene and aging. In addition, he served as deputy director and general counsel to the Berger Commission, which sought to restructure the hospital and nursing home industries across New York. He had also served as counsel to the Senate Health Committee.

The move to Farrell Fritz,

Ustin said, was fitting.

"The breadth and depth of Farrell Fritz' work in healthcare and more than a dozen other practice areas is the perfect combination for the work we will be doing in Albany on regulatory and government affairs matters," he said in a statement.

Ustin is joined by Vanessa Bongiorno and Daniel Rubin.

Bongiorno serves as the group's government relations director. In addition to healthcare, her experience includes working with clients in social service provider groups, foundations, pharmaceuticals and life sciences.

Rubin, an associate, is an attorney with expertise in healthcare regulations as well as in lobbying and litigation.

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