Latham Bulks Up Cartel Defense Group With Former DOJ Official

Elizabeth Prewitt will bolster Latham's cross-border antitrust expertise, the firm said.

By Scott Flaherty  
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Latham & Watkins has hired Elizabeth Prewitt, a former high-ranking U.S. Department of Justice official, as a partner in its global competition practice and litigation department.

Prewitt, who will split her time between Latham's Washington and New York offices, joins the firm after a multiyear stint at Hughes Hubbard & Reed, which she joined in 2015; shortly after that, The American Lawyer recognized her move as one of the splashiest hires of the year.

Prewitt’s government experience included heading up investigations into the manipulation of benchmark interest and foreign exchange rates.

Her transition to private practice came after some 16 years at the Justice Department, where she rose to become assistant chief of the agency’s antitrust division in New York between 2012 and 2014. In that capacity, she led investigations into financial institutions accused of manipulating the key benchmark London Interbank Offered Rate and foreign exchange rate manipulation. Toward the end of her time in government, Prewitt served a secondment at the European Commission, the European Union’s antitrust regulator based in Brussels, Belgium.

Prewitt's experience in private practice has built on the internationally focused work she did at the DOJ. Her practice includes defending global and large U.S. companies in criminal and civil antitrust investigations, with specific work on guiding
companies through cross-border, anti-cartel enforce-
ment efforts by governments in Europe and Asia,
according to Latham.

“The experience and inside knowledge that Liz
brings to the table from her 16 years of government
service in particular further solidifies Latham’s
status among the top echelon of truly global anti-
trust groups that can offer best-in-class counsel
to companies around the world as they address
their most complex antitrust and competition law
challenges,” said a statement by Amanda Reeves,
co-chairwoman of Latham’s global antitrust and
competition practice.

The head of Latham’s Washington office, Michael
Egge, who formerly co-chaired the firm’s competi-
tion group added that Prewitt’s hire was well timed,
as the firm’s cartel defense practice “has exploded
over the last 15 years,” he said.

“Adding another seasoned U.S. criminal cartel
litigator on the east coast with deep government
experience provides our clients even more access to
market-leading capabilities in the jurisdictions that
present the most daunting exposure,” Egge said in a
statement. “Liz does that and so much more because
she has guided clients globally, not just in the U.S.”

Explaining her reasons for the move, Prewitt
pointed in part to existing relationships she had
with other members of Latham’s antitrust prac-
tice who she overlapped with at the DOJ, includ-
ing Niall Lynch in the firm’s San Francisco office
and Larry Buterman in New York. She also noted
the expertise of other Latham antitrust lawyers,
including Maggy Sullivan in the firm’s D.C. office.
The firm’s roster of antitrust lawyers, said Prewitt,
have burnished Latham’s reputation as a leader in
competition law.

Beyond those relationships and the firm’s reputa-
tion, Prewitt said her practice aligned well with
the firm’s strategic focuses on adding to its existing
expertise representing financial services and life
sciences companies in antitrust cases. She also said
she views Latham’s antitrust group as a genuinely
global one that works seamlessly across borders,
a platform that also matches well with Prewitt’s
practice.

“That’s just tremendous experience to tap into,”
she said. “We really have truly European practitio-
ners and practitioners all over the world.”

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