

TEXAS LAWYER GO-TO GUIDE

TEXAS'
TOP NOTCH
LAWYERS



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EDITOR'S LETTER

Dear Readers:

Welcome to *The Go-To Guide*, a special magazine from *Texas Lawyer* that lists the Lone Star State's top attorneys in 27 practice areas.

The Go-To Guide is no ordinary "best" list. No one bought his or her way into these pages. And neither beauty nor swimsuits factored into the selection process. Over a period of more than seven months, the *Texas Lawyer* editorial department researched lawyers in private practice as well as federal and state prosecutors. We accepted nominations, too. Most importantly, we spoke to hundreds of attorneys across the state and asked them who they would turn to if they needed representation in a particular practice area. You were amazingly candid and helpful. Thank you.

The result is *The Go-To Guide*. From the outset there are a few things you should know: Each lawyer — all 135 of them — is identified by name, title, firm/prosecutor's office, city and age. Each of the 27 practice areas has one go-to lawyer and four top-notch lawyers. The magazine includes a profile of each go-to lawyer; next to each top-notch lawyer are two comments from his or her peers. With the exception of the criminal prosecution category, the list does not include government, in-house or legal services lawyers — we'll save those lists for another day.

Of course, it wasn't easy deciding who to include in *The Go-To Guide*. There are many remarkable Texas lawyers whose names aren't listed. Some of you will disagree with the selections. Regardless, I want to know what you think. E-mail me at cmcgushin@texas-lawyer.com. I look forward to hearing from you.

Texas should be proud of its vibrant, thriving legal community. And we all should be proud of the lawyers who follow in these pages. Happy reading!



Colleen Bridget McGushin
Editor in Chief
Texas Lawyer

P.S. Special thanks to award-winning free-lance writer Bill Jeffreys of Houston, who helped research and write these pieces.

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Joe K. Longley

It's a wonder Joe K. Longley finds time to sleep. He is a principal drafter of the Texas Deceptive Trade Practices Consumer Protection Act, co-drafter of several legislative amendments involving insurance laws and codes, and an active litigator in insurance matters. Longley served as the first head of the Antitrust and Consumer Protection Division of the Texas Office of the Attorney General (from 1973 to 1975 under John Hill).

In one current Travis County case, Longley represents a group of more than 48,000 small-business people and their families — “mom-and-pop operations,” he says — who allege they were duped into paying more than they should have for health and accident insurance. His contention is that the buyers were tricked into unnecessarily paying dues and initiation fees to join a group that promised low prices. The class has not been certified.

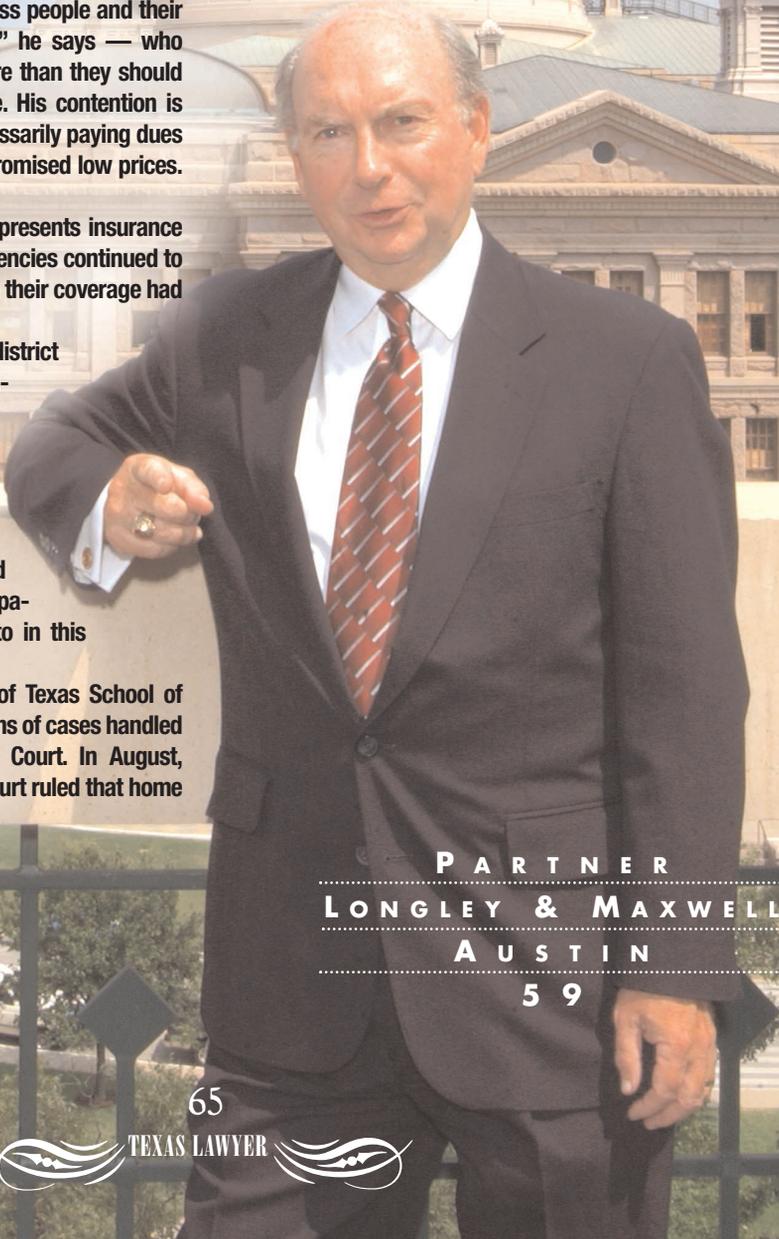
In another pending case, Longley represents insurance customers who allege that insurance agencies continued to cash their premium checks, even though their coverage had lapsed.

Longley also has cases pending in district courts against major providers of commercial insurance. They do not offer uninsured, underinsured and personal-injury protection while providing general liability coverage for use of vehicles not owned by companies. Generally, such coverage must be offered with auto liability policies, but the companies say they should not be required to in this commercial situation.

A 1969 graduate of the University of Texas School of Law, Longley's experience includes dozens of cases handled on appeal and to the Texas Supreme Court. In August, Longley won a case in which the high court ruled that home

builders may not disclaim the implied warranty of habitability where the construction presents a danger to life, health or safety.

Working with his partner, Philip Maxwell, the pair offered a long-lived monthly newsletter, *Texas Consumer Law Reporter*, beginning in 1981. It has since been replaced with an online subscription service: Texas Insurance Law Online. Their latest book, “Texas Insurance Law: Rights and Remedies,” is due out late this year.



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