

# Legal Times

LAW AND LOBBYING IN THE NATION'S CAPITAL

**New Outlets** Ready or not, competition is coming to retail electric customers. But old transmission and generation monopolies persist. An Energy Law Practice Focus, Page 25

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## Pay to Play: Conventions' Sideshow

Lobbyists Gain Access Via Private Parties

By SAM LOEWENBERG

When most people think of political conventions, they think of a televised ritual where party platforms are debated and presidential nominations are announced state delegation by state delegation.

But for the thousands of lobbyists and their corporate clients, the conventions are an opportunity to fete lawmakers and their staffs in a carnival atmosphere free from regulatory oversight.

When the GOP convention kicks off in Philadelphia and Democrats gather in Los Angeles this summer, corporations and lobbyists will pay tens of thousands of dollars to throw lavish private parties in honor of individual lawmakers. The money goes neither to the candidates nor to the parties' national committees. Instead, corporations are paying for the simple pleasure of gaining unfettered access to lawmakers.

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The biggest D.C. protest in years took a toll on the courts, the cops—and the lawyers on the front lines.

By CARRIE JOHNSON

Mark Goldstone decided it was time for a 10-minute break.

He fell into a chair, ran his fingers through his short blond hair, and exhaled. "I'm struggling right now," he told a colleague.

Goldstone and a small contingent of D.C.-area lawyers had already been at work for five hours. It was hot—and it was Sunday. And they were confined in the dingy, windowless arraignment room at D.C. Superior Court.

It might seem like any other day in the local

courthouse, except for the exultant faces of the defendants—and the sheer number of them. "Yeah!" roared one just-released boy, pumping his fist in the air and tugging on his canvas pants. The crowd couldn't resist a giggle. But Goldstone and the other lawyers in the room didn't have the time or the energy to crack a smile: It was 2 o'clock in the afternoon, and there were dozens more cases to go.

Last week's World Bank/International Monetary Fund demonstration was the biggest

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**DEMONSTRATION DAYS:** Mark Goldstone found counsel for protesters and spent his Sunday in Superior Court.

LOUSTON: PATRICE GILBERT; POLICE: STACEY CHAMP

## Akin's Gambit

How the Firm is Making Its Way into Tech Wars

By VANESSA BIRN

Akin, Gump partner Victoria Baylin keeps her cell phone by her side.

She needs to be easy to reach these days. A few of her high-tech clients have been left feeling "wiggly" by the wild swings in the Nasdaq. Financing deals have been thrown into limbo and employee stock options have lost all value.

But the 39-year-old Baylin is surprisingly unruffled by the market's volatility as she gets set to lead Akin, Gump's expansion into Northern Virginia.

The firm will move ahead with plans to secure space along the Dulles Corridor, even if Internet stocks fall further, Baylin asserts.



**TAKING STOCK:** Victoria Baylin is leading Akin, Gump's move into

PATRICE GILBERT

## Dot-Com Drop-Off

By TATIANA BONCOMPAGNI

The stock market has sent a clear message to D.C.-area high-tech deal-makers—your job just got harder.

The stock market meltdown of April 14 turned the high-tech industry on its head, indicating that investor's seemingly insa-

*Turmoil Puts IPOs on Ice, Firms Reconsider Their*

# On the Street, in Court with the Protesters

PROTEST, FROM PAGE 1

nonviolent protest to hit Washington since the Vietnam War rallies some 30 years ago. More than 1,200 arrests in three days overtaxed not only the court and the Metropolitan Police Department, but also a wide-ranging network of defense lawyers and civil libertarians who tried to help the ragtag protesters.

In meetings that began last January, representatives from the National Lawyers Guild, the National Conference of Black Lawyers, the Midnight Special Law Collective, the American Civil Liberties Union, the Public Defender Service, and students from area law schools hammered out their approach to the protest. They divided up the labor—this group would do criminal defense, that one would handle freedom of speech issues—and dubbed themselves the A-16 Legal Group, after the April 16 start date of the Mobilization for Global Justice, the formal name of the protest.

In the consensus-obsessed world of the progressive movement, where even a decision to be photographed for a newspaper article requires a group vote, activists hardly jump at the chance to claim they're in charge. The lawyers representing them are no different.

"The thought of having to represent 2,000 of my closest friends alone is overwhelming," Goldstone said April 16, before getting up to rejoin the action.

Goldstone, a Bethesda, Md., lawyer who frequently represents protesters, got involved with the World Bank effort several months ago when he spoke at a civil disobedience conference. He leaned on other D.C.-area defense attorneys to donate their time in the weeks leading up to the march. He also convinced Superior Court judges last week that local rules allowed them to release demonstrators without requiring them to return to the city for another court appearance, after they had paid a \$50 fine.



**HOT LINE:** Jim Drew, chairman of the D.C. chapter of the National Lawyers Guild, spent most of the weekend mulling the phones and watching on televisions in his Dupont Circle office the clashes between protesters and police.

"It's like a parking ticket," explained Betty Ballester, one of the local defense attorneys who volunteered Sunday afternoon. "It's an administrative remedy."

## ARREST!

Before court closed on Sunday, 84 demonstrators had been processed.

But a huge percentage of the 600 protesters arrested the night before—ironically, the group was in the process of marching against a skyrocketing U.S. prison population—had simply paid their \$50 and rejoined their cheering friends. Police took another, more vocal group of 600 into custody on Monday for crossing police lines. Lawyers and court personnel

worked long hours, deep into the week, to move the new group through the system.

Those who didn't pay up immediately spent the night in yellow school buses, driving from precinct to precinct, hands tethered behind their backs with milk-colored plastic cuffs.

"I don't feel the punishment fit the perceived crime," said Kristi Lee, a 1999 graduate of the University of Maryland who waited for a friend in the courthouse on Sunday.

Lee showed off bruises on her wrists and a handwritten, six-digit number on her right arm that police used to match her up with her belongings after she gave her name and paid her fine. She said she spent six hours on a bus with no food or water before being dropped off at "the mental institution"—that's St. Elizabeths Hospital in Southeast—and getting photographed.

"We got fruit punch—it was gross—and bologna sandwiches on white bread with mayonnaise, which was bad because a lot of people were vegetarians."

Lee said she couldn't continue to protest the next day; she had to return to her advertising job.

## HOTLINE!

The steady rain that fell last Monday morning seemed to reflect Jim Drew's mood.

Drew, head of the D.C. chapter of the National Lawyers Guild and keeper of a 24-hour hotline during the weekend, sat in a conference room in his Dupont Circle office, watching the protesters clash with police on two 12-inch televisions set up near the window. Juggling

three phone lines that rang nonstop with reports from law students observing the street fighting, Drew exuded a weary peace.

"You know the old song about 'the revolution will not be televised?'" he asked, pointing at the TVs. "Well, it's not true. Just look at it."

A few blocks away, George Washington University law student Zachary Wolfe tried to wiggle through a crowd of protesters and busybodies to reach a line of demonstrators. Wearing chemistry goggles around his neck to protect against a pepper spray attack and a fluorescent green cap that marked him as a "legal observer," Wolfe finally managed to inquire whether three young women

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