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ALSTON & BIRD OPENS WEST COAST OFFICES **[Weston Benshoof](#) to Become Firm's Los Angeles Office** ***Attorneys from Akin Gump to Establish Silicon Valley Practice***

ATLANTA– July 30, 2008 – Alston & Bird LLP today announced a major expansion into California with the Los Angeles firm of Weston Benshoof Rochefort Rubalcava & MacCuish LLP and its 83 attorneys becoming part of Alston & Bird. The firm also announced the opening of a 12-attorney office in Silicon Valley. The addition of the new lawyers in California will bring the total number of attorneys at Alston & Bird to more than 900.

The new West Coast offices mark the latest in an expansion at Alston & Bird that will have seen the opening of three new offices in the past year.

“Alston & Bird’s continued growth is the result of our increasing national and international client base for whom our strategic approach is simple: We will be where our clients are and need us to be,” said Richard R. Hays, Alston & Bird’s managing partner. “While Alston & Bird has been representing clients on the West Coast for years, teaming up with some of the best talent in Los Angeles and Silicon Valley gives us stronger footing in a number of key practice areas that will benefit our clients and better serve their needs.”

Weston Benshoof's highly regarded areas of expertise include its environmental and land use practices, which will complement Alston & Bird's own energy infrastructure and sustainability practice - recently ranked as a top national and international practice in the 2008 editions of *Chambers USA* and *Chambers Global Guides*. The 2008 *Chambers USA Guide* also ranked four Weston Benshoof lawyers and its environmental practice section among the best in California.

"We are particularly excited about teaming with Weston Benshoof's talented and deep litigation department," said Hays. "We share many client relationships with them, and we look forward to building those relationships. Weston Benshoof's strong litigation and trial practice, which includes intellectual property, complex business and class action litigation, adds substantial depth to Alston & Bird's existing litigation practice."

Weston Benshoof also brings to Alston & Bird its significant experience in real estate, construction, and water resources, which complement the environmental and land use practices. Leveraging Weston Benshoof's environmental expertise in California with the firm's energy policy and finance practices in Washington and New York will keep Alston & Bird at the top in these emerging areas of policy and law.

Weston Benshoof will officially become part of Alston & Bird on Sept. 1, 2008.

Edward J. Casey, managing partner of Weston Benshoof, said, "Alston & Bird is a highly regarded firm, with some of the foremost practitioners in the country. The firm's reputation for excellent attorneys, client focus and a culture that fosters teamwork makes them the perfect fit for us. Joining Alston & Bird allows us to offer a wider and deeper breadth of expertise to Weston Benshoof's clients, many of which the two firms share."

The opening of a Silicon Valley office in Palo Alto will strengthen Alston & Bird's acclaimed intellectual property practice. Three partners joining the office - Yitai Hu, Sean DeBruine and Steve Hemminger - have extensive experience in IP litigation. They and the other attorneys in Palo Alto, who are joining from Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP, primarily represent international clients involved in a variety of technology-related businesses, including information technology, computer software, Internet infrastructure and electronics. They have successfully handled complex patent and technology license issues involving U.S. companies and those from Taiwan, Hong Kong and China.

"Alston & Bird is highly regarded for its intellectual property platform, which is both national and international," Mr. Hu said. "That fact, coupled with their workplace culture, made them an excellent base from which to serve our growing Asian IP client base."

Randall L. Allen, the former chair of the firm's Litigation & Trial Practice group, will relocate to the Bay Area.

About Alston & Bird

With more than 900 attorneys, Alston & Bird is a leading national AmLaw 100 firm. The firm's core practice areas are intellectual property, complex litigation, corporate and tax, with national industry focuses in health care, energy, financial services, and public policy. The firm has built a reputation as one of the country's best employers, appearing on FORTUNE magazine's ranking of the "100 Best Companies to Work For" nine years in a row, more often and more highly ranked than any other law firm in the United States. The firm has offices in New York, Washington, Charlotte, Atlanta, Dallas, Palo Alto and Research Triangle Park, N.C., and will open its office in Los Angeles Sept. 1.

For more information on Alston & Bird, please visit www.alston.com.