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Leech Tishman Adds Benefits Expert From Stoel Rives

By **Alexis Shanes**

Law360 (February 12, 2021, 5:21 PM EST) -- Leech Tishman picked up a benefits expert from Stoel Rives whose experience includes a stint as an Internal Revenue Service attorney, the firm has announced, saying the development comes as taxes and employee benefits are top of mind for clients.

Bruce McNeil joins Leech Tishman Fuscaldo & Lampl LLC after roughly two years as a partner at Stoel Rives LLP. He was previously a partner at The Wagner Law Group, **Littler Mendelson PC** and Dorsey & Whitney LLP, as well as an attorney at the IRS, the firm said Wednesday.

"I don't think I work a day in my life," McNeil told Law360 on Friday. "I enjoy the practice. I enjoy the challenge."



Bruce McNeil

McNeil will work from Leech Tishman's Pittsburgh headquarters as well as its Los Angeles office, the firm said. He joins just over a dozen other members of the firm's labor and employment practice group and roughly 85 attorneys nationwide.

"The goal is to elevate the Leech Tishman employment and labor group to more of a national prominence and make it the firm people think about when they think about employee benefits and nonqualified deferred compensation," he said.

McNeil said some of his clients have had to pause matching contributions during the coronavirus pandemic to save cash but plan to reinstate those benefits on the other side of the crisis. Others are turning to nonqualified deferred compensation plans for executives to save money without forcing employees to take the hit, he added.

President Joe Biden's focus on health care is also shifting the benefits landscape for McNeil's clients, he said.

"One of the things that we're going to be working on is developing a deep bench for health and welfare plans," he said. "That's going to be a very, very busy area. The pandemic has caused employers, employees to look at these benefits a little bit differently."

McNeil is also starting conversations with clients about how to handle anticipated tax increases under the Biden administration, including how to spread out tax consequences for executives, he said.

A fellow of the American College of Employee Benefits Counsel, McNeil has testified before the U.S. Senate Committee on Finance, the U.S. Department of Labor's ERISA Advisory Council and the U.S. Government Accountability Office, according to the firm.

He is editor-in-chief of the Journal of Pension Planning & Compliance and the Journal of Deferred Compensation: Nonqualified Plans and Executive Compensation.

"Bruce is a nationally renowned expert in the field of employee benefits," Leech Tishman Employment

and Labor Chair Philip Toomey said in a statement. "In a time when many of our clients are anticipating an increase in their overall tax liability, employee benefits and deferred compensation issues remain top of mind."

McNeil has served as an adjunct professor at the University of Michigan Law School. He has authored more than 40 books and is working on another.

He earned his law degree from Drake University Law School and a Master of Laws from Georgetown University Law Center.

--Editing by Abbie Sarfo.

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