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## **Seyfarth Shaw Partner Camille A. Olson, Senate Witness for ADA Amendments Act, Comments on President's Signing of Bill into Law**

Chicago, IL (September 25, 2008)—Seyfarth Shaw LLP, one of America's leading full-service law firms, today released the following statement from Camille A. Olson, a Senate and House witness who provided testimony on the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADA Amendments Act) and Chair of the national law firm's Complex Discrimination Litigation Practice Group:

"The President's signing of the ADA Amendments Act today reflects the coming together of the business community and disability advocates who worked toward the common goal of meeting the needs of employees without compromising the competitiveness of America's businesses.

"This new law, effective January 1, 2009, expands the scope of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Under the ADA Amendments Act, millions of Americans may now claim to be disabled who prior to the new law were not considered to have a disability.

"The ADA Amendments Act undoes the Supreme Court's decisions on lawsuits brought under the ADA for over a decade, and every federal and state court decision that hinged on the reasoning of the Supreme Court's decisions on those lawsuits is now brought into question and may be wiped away. The ADA Amendments Act effectively resets our understanding of how employers and employees can best work together to address employees' disability-related requests for accommodation.

"The ADA Amendments Act may likely spark new lawsuits brought by plaintiffs seeking to test the law. For America's employers, this means that the rules they have learned and adopted concerning disability accommodation requests no longer apply. In the era of the ADA Amendments Act, many people with a treatable impairment could be considered disabled. Employers need to immediately look at their existing policies, handbooks, procedures and job descriptions to determine whether they may now be at risk for a lawsuit under the ADA Amendments Act."

Camille Olson is a partner at Seyfarth Shaw LLP and a member of its National Labor and Employment Law Steering Committee and National Chairperson of its Complex Discrimination Litigation Practice Group. Her 20 years of practice have concentrated in all areas of litigation, with a concentration in complex labor and employment law, representing companies nationwide in employment discrimination and harassment matters, challenges to the independent contractor status of workers, and wage and hour matters. Throughout the last ten years she has also regularly appeared before the United States Senate, the United States House of Representatives, the EEOC, and the United States Department of Labor on her own behalf (as a recognized expert in various fields) and on behalf of the United States Chamber of Commerce and the Society for Human Resource Management. In these capacities she has provided the business perspective on proposed legislation to amend several laws, including ADA Amendments Act. Her Senate testimony on the ADA Amendments Act is available online at:

[http://www.seyfarth.com/dir\\_docs/news\\_item/7ed12988-7768-4cb4-8943-61d19c77d063\\_documentupload.pdf](http://www.seyfarth.com/dir_docs/news_item/7ed12988-7768-4cb4-8943-61d19c77d063_documentupload.pdf)

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