

# PRESS RELEASE

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## Baker Donelson Achieves Significant Increase in Human Rights Campaign Score

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(Memphis, TN/December 15, 2011) The law firm of Baker, Donelson, Bearman, Caldwell & Berkowitz, PC, has received a score of 85 in the Human Rights Campaign (HRC) 2012 Corporate Equality Index (CEI). This marks a 15-point increase from the Firm's 2011 CEI score.

The HRC's CEI report, released each fall, provides an in-depth analysis and rating of large U.S. employers and their policies and practices pertinent to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) employees. The scores are based primarily on the HRC CEI survey, which helps gauge trends and best practices among all businesses or in particular industries. More information is available at [www.hrc.org/cei](http://www.hrc.org/cei).

"We value our employees at Baker Donelson and are honored to be able to participate in this survey," said Mark A. Baugh, chair of Baker Donelson's Diversity Committee and a shareholder in the Firm's Nashville office.

The HRC had expected many scores to be lower due to significantly more stringent criteria in the annual CEI. Mr. Baugh noted that the increase in Baker Donelson's score is due in part to an increased focus on issues affecting the Firm's diverse employees. In 2011, the Firm revised its Equal Employment Opportunity policy to include sexual orientation, gender identity and marital status, and revised its bereavement policy to extend to domestic partners and their families.

Baker Donelson also held firm-wide training on issues relating to the LGBT community in 2011. The objectives of the training, which was attended by attorneys and staff, were to foster an understanding of the importance of LGBT diversity and inclusion in order to maintain a productive and inclusive workforce and to further the Firm's efforts to attract and retain the best and brightest people, who embrace the Firm's shared beliefs of integrity, diversity, accomplishment and mutual respect.

Since the launch of its Diversity Initiative in 2002, Baker Donelson's diverse attorney population and the number of minority shareholders have more than quadrupled, far outpacing the Firm's overall growth. The recruitment and retention of female attorneys and the representation of women in leadership positions at the Firm have improved as well.

The Firm's efforts have been recognized by MultiCultural Law magazine, which consistently ranks Baker Donelson on its annual lists of the "Top 100 Law Firms for Diversity" and the "Top 100 Law Firms for Women."