

PRESS RELEASE

Baker Donelson Bolsters Government Enforcement and Investigations Practice with Former U.S. Attorney Robert J. Higdon Jr. and Former Assistant U.S. Attorney John David Koesters in Raleigh

November 04, 2025

The national law firm of Baker Donelson has expanded its Government Enforcement and Investigations Group with the addition of former United States Attorney Robert J. "Bobby" Higdon Jr. and former Assistant United States Attorney John David "J.D." Koesters. Both join as shareholders in the Firm's Raleigh office, adding to Baker Donelson's growing presence in the Carolinas.

"We feel extremely fortunate to be able to add two attorneys of this caliber to our team," said Matthew S. Chester, chair of Baker Donelson's Government Enforcement and Investigations Group. "Bobby's more than 30 years of experience in both government and private practice and J.D.'s background of more than a decade of service at the Department of Justice and Department of Defense are a strong complement to our practice, and we're excited to expand our capabilities into North Carolina."

As U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of North Carolina, Mr. Higdon led federal law enforcement efforts across eastern North Carolina, overseeing high-profile cases involving national security, cybercrime, public corruption, financial fraud, health care fraud, violent crime, and drug offenses. He worked closely with agencies such as the FBI, IRS, HHS, DEA, and various state and local enforcement groups. As a member of the Attorney General's Advisory Committee, he provided counsel to the Attorney General of the United States on policy and management issues.

Prior to his term as U.S. Attorney, Mr. Higdon served for 24 years as an Assistant United States Attorney in the Eastern and Western Districts of North Carolina, including 11 years as Chief of the Criminal Division and eight years leading the Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force in the Eastern and Western Districts, respectively. He also spent more than two years as a senior trial attorney for the DOJ's Public Integrity Section, handling public corruption matters across the United States and its territories. He has tried more than 40 matters to verdict before juries in federal courts around the country.

Mr. Higdon's private practice experience has included representing corporate and individual clients in a range of investigative and white-collar matters and conducting numerous internal investigations for corporations operating in heavily regulated industries. He has also acted as an advisor to prosecutors, defense counsel, judges, and law enforcement overseas for a number of years, including in Kosovo, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Indonesia, and the Philippines.

A two-time recipient of the Department of Justice Director's Award for Superior Performance, Mr. Higdon has earned more than 50 commendations from law enforcement agencies for his work on investigations and prosecutions. He is a member of the National Association of Former United States Attorneys, the Fourth Circuit Judicial Conference, and The Federalist Society. He earned both his law degree and his undergraduate degree from Wake Forest University.

Mr. Koesters advises organizations and individuals navigating internal investigations, False Claims Act (FCA) allegations, government enforcement actions, complex litigation, and cybersecurity risks. He leads sensitive

internal investigations involving alleged violations of state and federal law, corporate governance concerns, and cybersecurity compliance risks arising from regulatory oversight. His experience includes representing health care systems, defense contractors, and critical infrastructure organizations facing traditional and novel theories of liability under the FCA brought by DOJ's Civil-Cyber Fraud Initiative and Health Care Fraud Units, as well as qui tam relators. He also leads clients through all stages of managing cybersecurity risk.

During his service as an Assistant U.S. Attorney, Mr. Koesters led multi-agency investigations into transnational criminal operations involving money laundering, fraud, and national security offenses. As a U.S. Army Judge Advocate, he advised Cyber Protection Teams on global defensive cyber missions and completed a combat tour in Afghanistan, where he assisted in the development of human rights compliance programs for detention operations. Recognized as a top trial attorney, Mr. Koesters tried more than 25 cases to verdict without losing a contested charge.

A graduate of Wake Forest University School of Law, Mr. Koesters is a Certified Information Privacy Professional (CIPP/US) and a member of the International Association of Privacy Professionals. He is a recipient of the Bronze Star for his service during Operation Enduring Freedom and is an Honor Graduate of the United States Army Commissioning Course.

Mr. Higdon and Mr. Koesters, who both join Baker Donelson from the firm K&L Gates, are the latest additions to Baker Donelson's growing Raleigh office. Launched in 2021, this location now includes nearly 20 attorneys with practices that encompass health care, financial services, energy, commercial real estate, mergers and acquisitions, labor and employment, commercial and construction litigation, and general corporate advice and counsel.

Matthew W. Wolfe, managing shareholder of Baker Donelson's Raleigh office, said, "Bobby and J.D. are outstanding additions to our team here. They have exceptional reputations in the marketplace, and we're excited to have them grow the Firm's government enforcement and investigations practice into North Carolina."