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Trio of Texas-Based Lawyers Joins Husch Blackwell's Energy & Natural Resources Team

Husch Blackwell is pleased to announce that its Texas-based Energy & Natural Resources team added three new attorneys in the past week.

Austin-based Alaina Zermeno joins Husch Blackwell as an associate, coming to the firm from the Public Utility Commission of Texas (PUC), where she quickly built a reputation as one of the Commission's leading investigative attorneys. Zermeno served in PUC's Legal Division and Oversight & Enforcement Division and represented the Commission before the State Office of Administrative Hearings (SOAH) in various matters, including enforcement, as well as in hearings before Commission administrative law judges. She initiated investigations into regulated entities that violated statutory law (primarily the Public Utilities Regulatory Act and the Texas Water Code) and Commission rules.

Brett Nuttall joins Husch Blackwell's Houston office as an associate. His practice is focused on energy industry corporate transactions, including M&A, joint ventures, commercial contracts, and leasing, among other transaction types. His work spans the energy industry, from renewable energy assets to gas-fired generation facilities, and also covers midstream infrastructure, storage, and liquified natural gas. Nuttall arrives at Husch Blackwell from Kirkland & Ellis, where he was an associate in its Houston office.

Kara Hayenga joins Husch Blackwell's Energy & Natural Resources and Real Estate teams as an associate and practices out of the firm's Austin office. Hayenga represents developers, institutional investors, equity partners and financial institutions in various aspects of commercial real estate transactions, including acquisitions, dispositions, financing, leasing/subleasing, development of real estate, and general real estate matters.

“Thanks to our nationwide network of colleagues and clients, Husch Blackwell is a destination law firm for Texas-based attorneys who practice in the renewable energy space,” said Cacki Jewart, the head of the firm’s Energy & Natural Resources group. “Our team now has 16 lawyers in Texas and can address virtually all areas of operation, from transactional and real estate to regulatory and litigation. We expect continued growth and are looking to add talented lawyers who fit our practice and our firm culture.”

“This is a strong group of lateral attorneys who provide outstanding depth across our practice,” said Chris Reeder, the co-lead of Husch Blackwell’s Energy Regulation practice. “Our clients will particularly appreciate Alaina’s PUC experience, especially in the wake of the winter storm and resulting issues with the electricity grid in Texas.”