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Passing of Hobbs Straus Founding Partner – Charles A. Hobbs

We are greatly saddened to announce that Charlie Hobbs, one of our founding partners, passed away yesterday at the age of 88. Despite a number of health issues, Charlie remained active in the practice of Indian law until late last year. Those of us who had the pleasure of knowing and working with Charlie will greatly miss his wisdom, his wit, and his warmth as a colleague and friend.

Charlie worked in the field of Indian law for nearly 60 years, first with the law firm of Wilkinson, Cragun and Barker, and then with our firm, since it was founded in 1982.

After graduating from George Washington University Law School in 1957, Charlie clerked for Circuit Judge Warren Burger before Burger was made Chief Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court. Chief Justice Burger thought so highly of Charlie that he put him in charge of the selection process for his law clerks for many years.

He had many notable achievements in the field of Indian law. He was an expert on Indian tax law issues and Indian hunting and fishing rights and successfully litigated a number of landmark Indian law cases. He won *United States v. Mitchell*, 463 U.S. 206 (1983), which broadly established the right of tribes to be paid damages resulting from the Federal Government's mismanagement of their trust assets. He also successfully argued the case of *Menominee Tribe v. United States*, 391 U.S. 404 (1968), where the Supreme Court ruled that the Menominee Tribe kept its existence as a tribe even though its status as a federally recognized tribe had been terminated by Congress. In ruling that the Tribe retained its treaty hunting and fishing rights despite termination, that case also established the important rule of statutory construction that Indian treaties were, if possible, to be construed according to the understanding of the tribe that signed the treaty.

In 1993, Charlie was honored at the National Congress of American Indians' national convention for distinguished service to the Indian community. On December 9, 2016, Charlie was awarded the Lifetime Achievement Award by the DC Chapter of the Native American Bar Association.

A memorial service will be held for Charlie at 12:00 p.m., this coming Thursday, February 16th at Gawler's Funeral Home, 5130 Wisconsin Avenue N.W., Washington, DC. Our firm is planning to have a memorial for Charlie at a later date which will be announced in due course.