

**MEMORIAL RESOLUTION OF THE
ALLEN COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION
FOR J. PHILIP BURT
December 4, 2023**

WHEREAS, we meet today to honor and pay our respects to the memory of our colleague, mentor and friend, J. Philip Burt, who passed on July 21, 2023, at the age of 87; and

WHEREAS, Phil is survived by his children, Brian (and wife, Kelly), Steven and Julie. Phil is also survived by grandchildren, Cormac, Shannon, Quinn, Ben and Ryan.

Phil was born in Muncie, Indiana on December 14, 1935. After graduation from Muncie Central High School, Phil matriculated to the University of Michigan, where he received both his undergraduate and his Juris Doctor degree. It was during his time as a law student that Phil met the love of his life, his soulmate, the person he absolutely adored, Barbara Ann Burger. As many of us know, Barbara was number one in her law school class at Michigan, the fact of which Phil was very proud.

By the recordation of this Resolution, it is hoped that the essence of the person that Phil was might be better known. Some few years ago, our law firm dedicated its boardroom to Phil by the creation of a boardroom plaque in Phil's honor. The words were penned primarily by fellow partner, Michael Moellering. The plaque reads as follows:

"We dedicate this Boardroom to the values and vision of our founding partner, J. Philip Burt. Phil's life and practice reflect an uncommon and abiding commitment to human decency and excellence that has indelibly impacted his clients, colleagues and community for over fifty (50) years.

Utilizing a keen intellect, irrepressible energy, a self-deprecating wit and a creative disregard for unnecessary formality and convention, all in combination with a passion to share much needed hope with those who have no hope and to secure justice for those most in need, Phil's practice habits and perspective set the practice standard to which we all aspire.

The purpose of this dedication is, in part, to honor Phil in the present. The purpose is also to challenge and encourage each of us to take the very best of what we appreciate about Phil and put it into practice on a daily basis. Our challenge is not to imitate Phil. Quite frankly, it can't be done. Rather, our challenge is to simply and adaptively emulate his values and vision. In doing so, we, like Phil, will indelibly impact our clients, colleagues and our community in a manner that activates and honor's Phil's legacy for years to come."

After Phil's passing, the word "unique" has been often used to describe Phil. Webster's Dictionary defines unique as being the only one of its kind; notable, very unusual. Here follows some of Phil's outstanding traits:

INTEREST: Phil took the time to genuinely get to know his fellow attorneys, the staff and their family members. The entirety of the firm was included as part of Phil's family. Whenever a child was born and brought to the office to be introduced, Phil could be counted on to affectionately say: "That is the homeliest kid I've ever seen."

WISDOM: Phil was a well-respected lawyer. Through the years of his practice he became nationally known as an expert in federal banking law, especially related to savings and loan association matters. Phil's creative mind was so good that he often developed solutions that no one else had thought of.

DEDICATION TO BARBARA: Phil and Barbara seemingly did everything together. Phil often sought her counsel. Throughout Barbara's lengthy illness, Phil was always there with her. There were many, many days that Phil would work a full day and then leave to be with Barbara - to feed her dinner and to say good night to her.

SERVANT LEADER: Phil spent countless hours and invested a great deal of personal time in an effort to make the world a better place for more and more people. In the early 70's Phil attended the Paris Peace Talks with the goal of seeking an end to the war in Vietnam. Phil was instrumental in expanding the availability of PRO BONO legal services in Fort Wayne. He served on the Indiana Pro Bono Commission from 1999 to 2005, chairing the Commission from 2000-2005. In 2005, Phil gained national recognition when he received the American Bar Association's prestigious PRO BONO PUBLICO AWARD honoring his commitment to delivering volunteer legal services to the poor and disadvantaged. In 2015, both he and Barbara received the Allen County Bar Association's Pro Bono Service Award. He served as President of the Allen County Bar Association from 1980 to 1981.

FAIRNESS: Phil was always fair with his partners and associates. Especially in the early years of the firm, Phil was paid less than he deserved. I remember on numerous occasions being on the firm's Compensation Committee with Phil when he would reduce his year-end bonus so that the younger lawyers might take more monies home as part of their year-end bonus.

WIT AND HUMOR: Phil had the best combination of wit and humor I have ever personally witnessed. Phil's wit was spontaneous, sharp, pointed and hilarious. The real beauty was he could poke fun but not offend. If you were not subject to some of his witticisms, you worried that he didn't like you. For at least the first five years of being in the practice, and when there were enough people around to hear, I heard daily: "Sutton, I'm tired of doing all of your

work.” OR, “you look nice today in your suit, are you going to a funeral?” Quickly followed by “D.O. McCombs called, they want their suit back.”

Phil never let firm lawyers feel too haughty or proud, but he also had words of encouragement when we needed them. By the manner in which Phil conducted himself, Phil made the practice of law much more enjoyable. He always made a point of making sure we were a “family friendly” firm.

J. Philip Burt had the best combination of necessary traits in order to be deemed UNIQUE, and that he was!

The entire law firm misses J. Philip. We give thanks for the time we had together and the model of a great lawyer and person that he was and that he shared with us. We are also graciously thankful for the lasting impact that he has had on all those who knew him as well.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Allen County Bar Association gives public expression of its sorrow upon this, the occasion of the remembrance of the life of J. Philip Burt.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this resolution be unanimously adopted by those present upon this occasion;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Resolution be spread of record and become a part of the permanent online records of the Allen County Indiana Bar Association to evidence the respect and admiration of the members of the Bench and Bar for their dear, departed friend and colleague, J. Philip Burt.

Dated this 4th day of December, 2023 at Fort Wayne, Allen County, Indiana.

THE ALLEN COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION

By:



Andrew L. Teel, President, Allen County Bar Association

By:



Jennifer Lynne DeGroot, Judge, Allen Superior Court

Resolution prepared by Dennis D. Sutton

