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For Immediate Release

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Gary Fontana Joins Shartsis Friese as Of Counsel

San Francisco, December 12, 2008 – Shartsis Friese LLP announced today that Gary L. Fontana, formerly a senior partner with Thelen LLP in San Francisco, has joined the firm as of counsel.

Mr. Fontana's practice is focused on antitrust, insurance law and regulation and litigation involving the financial services industry. He has represented a wide variety of commercial and industrial companies in complex business cases. Since 1999, Mr. Fontana has been the lead counsel representing the California Department of Insurance in a fraud and conspiracy case involving the bond portfolio and insurance assets of Executive Life Insurance Company. That litigation has already produced \$740 million in recoveries for former policyholders. The final phase of that case will go to trial in federal court in Los Angeles sometime in 2009.

Art Shartsis commented, "Gary is an outstanding lawyer who brings a wealth of experience and expertise to the firm. We are very pleased to have him join our litigation and trial team at Shartsis Friese."

Mr. Fontana received his J.D. from Yale Law School in 1971, where he was editor of *Yale Law Journal*, and his B.A., *with honors*, from Cornell University.

Founded in San Francisco in 1975, Shartsis Friese LLP has over 50 lawyers. The firm has extensive trial and business litigation experience, including securities enforcement defense, and a complex transactional practice focused on investment advisers, hedge funds, mergers and acquisitions, corporate finance, securities, tax, venture capital, intellectual property and real estate.

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