

Judge Dismisses Pipeline Operator's Racketeering/Defamation Suit Against Greenpeace

A federal judge in North Dakota has dismissed a \$900 million defamation and racketeering suit against Greenpeace filed by Energy Transfer Partners, operator of the Dakota Access Pipeline.

Greenpeace was represented in the matter by Lance Koonce, Laura Handman, Lisa Zycherman, and Thomas R. Burke of **Davis Wright Tremaine**, the law firm said in a release.

District Judge Billy Roy Wilson wrote in his order dismissing the case that, "Posting articles written by people with similar beliefs does not create a RICO enterprise," and that, "Donating to people whose cause you support does not create a RICO enterprise."

Last month, the same Davis Wright Tremaine team won dismissal of similar RICO claims lodged against Greenpeace by Resolute Forest Products. That case was heard in the Northern District of California.

"The dismissal of these cases is of enormous importance not just to our clients but to watchdog and advocacy groups of all stripes," said Koonce. "Because if companies criticized by such organizations were able to bring claims under the guise of RICO, with its treble damage provision, that are really designed to chill speech, it would put critical discourse on issues of public significance at great risk."

