

Trial Team in County Judge Clay Jenkins Mask Case Honored for Efforts

Dallas Trial Lawyers Association honors group with John Howie Award for 'courageous pursuit of justice'

DALLAS – Lawyers representing Dallas County Judge Clay Jenkins in his legal standoff with Texas Gov. Greg Abbott over the wearing of masks to guard against COVID-19 have received the John Howie Award for their efforts.

The Dallas Trial Lawyers Association conveys the award each year to attorneys and their clients for “the courageous pursuit of justice in the face of adversity.” The award is named for renowned Dallas trial lawyer John Howie, who died in 2002.

“We decided to take this case – and do it pro bono – because we knew it was important for the health and safety of the people in Dallas County, and because it was the right thing to do,” says Charla Aldous, of AldousWalker in Dallas, who represents Judge Jenkins. Also on the trial team and receiving the award are attorneys Brent Walker, Tiffany Standly, Caleb Miller and Jeffrey Rasansky of AldousWalker, and Sean McCaffity of Sommerman, McCaffity, Quesada & Geisler. In Austin, the group includes noted appellate lawyer Doug Alexander of Alexander Dubose & Jefferson.

It is the second John Howie Award for Ms. Aldous, who first received it in 2010 in a case involving improper peer review of a doctor at UT Southwestern Medical Center in Dallas.

“I am honored to represent Judge Jenkins in something that matters as much as this case does,” says Mr. Walker.

The dispute behind this latest award began in August when, facing exponential growth in coronavirus cases, Judge Jenkins ordered people to wear masks in all public places. That led to litigation and Jenkins added Gov. Abbott as a defendant, based on the governor's prohibition against mask mandates. The case is right now before the Texas Fifth Court of Appeals in Dallas.

"We will wait and see what the court does, but to receive this award is recognition that, no matter the outcome, we're doing what good trial lawyers are supposed to do," says Mr. McCaffity.

The case is Greg Abbott et al. v. Clay Jenkins, case number 05-21-00733-CV in the Texas Fifth Court of Appeals in Dallas.

The AldousWalker LLP law firm represents clients in civil litigation, and specializes in high-profile, high-stakes cases. Learn more about the firm at <http://www.aldouslaw.com>.

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