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## **IN MEMORY OF PRESIDENT GERALD R. FORD**

**Grand Rapids, Michigan** – Law Weathers & Richardson acknowledges the meaningful contributions made throughout the life of their former partner and the 38<sup>th</sup> President of the United States, Gerald R. Ford.

Ford was a star athlete in his youth and at the University of Michigan, but turned down NFL contract offers in order to attend Yale Law School. He graduated in the top third of his class and in 1941 opened a Grand Rapids law practice with his longtime friend, Philip Buchen. Ford took a leave of absence from the firm to fight in World War II, during which time Buchen joined Butterfield, Keeney & Amberg, now known as Law Weathers & Richardson, on the condition there would be a place for Ford when he returned from the war.

Upon his return in 1946, Gerald Ford joined Buchen at Law Weathers & Richardson, becoming a partner in 1951. Ford spent his time at the firm practicing law in the morning, and campaigning in the afternoon. He practiced with the firm until he was elected to Congress, but remained a partner until 1959.

Buchen left the firm in 1961 to become Vice President of Business Affairs at Grand Valley State College. He returned to Law Weathers & Richardson after the college was successfully off the ground, and practiced with the firm until August of 1974 when Gerald Ford became President, and named him as White House Counsel.

“We feel incredible pride to have been involved in some part of the historic life of Gerald Ford,” said Bob Buchanan, Member of Law Weathers & Richardson. “He kept in contact with our firm over the years and was known as a real person to stick to his views, and a true and dedicated public servant.”

Raised in Grand Rapids, Ford had strong ties to Western Michigan. “Gerald Ford had a profound impact on the people of Michigan,” said Buchanan. “Several residents knew him personally and had great love and respect for his integrity, openness, and humble and friendly nature.”

The Gerald R. Ford Museum in Grand Rapids and the Gerald R. Ford Library in Ann Arbor were dedicated to Ford in 1981. Ford was recently awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom by Bill Clinton and the John F. Kennedy Profiles in Courage Award for his decision to pardon Richard Nixon to stop the agony America was experiencing over Watergate.

Ford is also the recipient of numerous other awards and honors by many civic organizations. Ford earned a B.A. from University of Michigan, and a law degree from Yale University.

**About Law Weathers & Richardson**

Law Weathers & Richardson, based in Grand Rapids, MI, is an established, multi-specialty law firm that has been a prominent fixture of the West Michigan business and legal community for 138 years. The firm provides high-quality legal services in virtually every area of the law to a broad spectrum of clients ranging from large, multinational corporations, banks and other financial institutions to closely-held businesses, not-for-profit organizations, health care providers, local governments and individuals. For more information, visit the firm's Web site at [www.lwr.com](http://www.lwr.com).

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