



**10 for TEN**  
ten attorneys who raised the  
bar over the last decade

# Patrick Collins

Perkins Coie LLP

In a decade of high-profile accomplishments in the public and private sector, Patrick Collins will most likely be remembered as the federal prosecutor who led the team that convicted former Governor George Ryan.

The Ryan trial, though, was only the most visible high point of a decade of accomplishments in public corruption investigations at the U.S. Attorney's Office. The trial was the culmination of one of the most visible, comprehensive and successful corruption investigations since Operation Greylord. Code-named Operation Safe Road, the eight-year investigation dominated Collins' life as a federal prosecutor. Under Collins' leadership, this investigation of corruption in the Illinois Secretary of State's office led to more than 75 convictions, including the former Governor and members of his inner circle. Perhaps most importantly, it exposed the public dangers associated with the "licenses for bribes" scandal that resulted in thousands of unqualified individuals obtaining truck licenses.

Operation Safe Road and the Ryan trial may have made Collins' famous around the federal building. But those attorneys who have worked alongside and opposite him know the qualities that earned that fame: hard work, incredible attention to detail, and tireless pursuit of the facts. Collins has used these skills to continue to notch courtroom victories three years after the jury returned with the biggest guilty verdict of his career.

Today, Collins works in private practice at the Chicago firm of Perkins Coie LLP where he has built the Chicago office's white collar practice from scratch into a top quality option for Fortune 500 companies dealing with sensitive internal investigations and government inquiries. "We were thrilled to have Patrick join us from the U.S. Attorney's Office," said Chris Wilson, Managing Partner of Perkins Coie's Chicago Office. "Patrick has brought the same energy, creativity and commitment to excellence to his private practice that were the hallmark of his years at the U.S. Attorney's Office."

Through active pro bono and civic work, Collins also has continued his strong commitment to public service. Shortly after beginning his administration, Governor Pat Quinn appointed Collins to serve as Chairman of the Illinois Reform Commission. The 15-member Commission conducted public hearings and produced a comprehensive report on government ethics reform in Illinois. As the Chicago Sun-Times noted in an editorial praising Collins' appointment, "He gets stuff done." As to the final report, The Chicago Tribune called it an "impeccably researched and detailed assault" on Illinois' culture of corruption.

Despite his considerable accomplishments in private practice and previous work leading corruption investigations for U.S. Attorney Patrick Fitzgerald, such as "pay to play" corruption in the City of Chicago's Hired Truck Program, Collins will always be known for the work that eventually led to Governor Ryan's conviction. The Ryan trial lasted six months. A team of veteran attorneys, led by noted defense attorney Dan Webb, represented Ryan in the case. The trial became a daily fixture in the Chicago newspapers and was heralded as one of the great legal battles in Chicago history. Time and again, throughout the battle, Collins proved up to the challenge.

"The Ryan trial really demanded all of Patrick's considerable skills as a trial attorney," said Joel Levin, one of Collins' co-prosecutors during the trial and now a colleague at Perkins Coie. "People watching over those six months could clearly see Patrick's mastery of the facts, his legal acumen, and his extraordinary preparation. But behind the scenes, his determined leadership and the spirit of team work he created were the real story of our success."

Results are the true measure of an attorney, though. During his amazing career, Collins has tried more than 20 federal cases to verdict. He has won all of them.

Beyond his courtroom victories, Collins' maintains a high profile in Chicago legal circles. He is a keynote speaker at a number of civic and charitable events every year. Collins also frequently speaks to in-house counsel and corporate audiences on matters relating to one of his specialties: internal investigations and defense of corporations facing government scrutiny. Collins is also a regular guest on local and national television and a frequent contributor to newspaper opinion pages, where he writes about local and national legal topics.

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