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ABC Update

BY LISA HOLDER

Lastreto Appointed to the Bench



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For 34 years, Fresno, Calif., attorney **René Lastreto, II** litigated creditor rights in all courts in California. He was sworn in as a new U.S. bankruptcy judge for the Eastern District of California, Fresno division, on Sept. 14, 2015. With bankruptcy courthouses in Redding, Sacramento, Modesto, Fresno and Bakersfield, the Eastern District is California's largest judicial district. Judge Lastreto succeeds Hon. W. Richard Lee, who retired after a distinguished career on the bench. Judge Lee is now serving as a recall bankruptcy judge for the Eastern District.

An ABI member since 1998, Judge Lastreto is well equipped to take on this new challenge. He became board certified in Creditors' Rights Law in 2005 by the American Board of Certification and represented clients in litigation matters from motion practice through trial and judgment in both state and federal courts. Judge Lastreto's experience includes provisional remedies, post-judgment collection litigation, Commercial Code disputes and construction litigation. His practice included bankruptcy disputes, including litigation of contested matters and adversary proceedings in chapters 7, 9, 11, 12 and 13. He represented secured and unsecured creditors, creditors' committees, trustees, asset-purchasers, lessees, lessors, debtors and estate professionals in bankruptcy. In the last 10 years, Judge Lastreto focused his practice on representing institutional creditors in chapters 7 and 11 cases.

Judge Lastreto was the lead attorney in the Financial Services Practice for Fresno-based Lang, Richert & Patch, for which he served on the firm's management committee and was its chief financial officer. He served as a managing partner in 2004-05 and again in 2014 through July 2015.

He was a frequent faculty member in many continuing education programs, both teaching and writing on creditor-related and agricultural issues. He has written extensively on agricultural liens and secured creditor

priority disputes. He was on the commercial panel of the American Arbitration Association and arbitrated numerous commercial disputes, including construction and contract disputes. Judge Lastreto also served on the board of directors of the Central California Bankruptcy Association, and for several years served on its annual institute organizing committee.



Hon. René Lastreto, II

The Fresno community welcomes one of its own to the bench. Judge Lastreto attended two years at California State University in Fresno before he received his B.S. *cum laude* from the University of Utah in 1978. After graduating from law school in 1981 from the University of San Francisco, where he achieved moot court honors, he returned home and spent his entire legal career in Fresno.

Judge Lastreto thoroughly enjoys his new position. He appreciates the time he now has to closely review disputed matters and consider issues before making a ruling. He is learning a great deal about keeping court operations running smoothly. Judge Lastreto also appreciates the input he receives from his Fresno colleagues, Judge **Fredrick E. Clement** and Recall Judge Lee, as well as his Sacramento colleagues, all of whom have helped him throughout his transition. Judge Lastreto is reassured by their collegiality.

Judge Lastreto is always a gentleman, temperate and even-keeled even in the face of adverse counsel. He believes in building and maintaining relationships, and in mentoring young lawyers. As a judge, he intends to listen, be pleasant to appear before and render prompt decisions.

He and his wife, Rebecca, enjoy golf and traveling. Judge Lastreto has one son and two step daughters. He also enjoys spending time with Rebecca's four grandchildren. [abi](http://abi.org)