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Joseph W. Bellacosa

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# INTRODUCTION OF SENATOR MICHAEL A.L. BALBONI: TERRORISM AND ITS IMPACT ON INSURANCE: LEGISLATIVE RESPONSES AND COVERAGE ISSUES

JOSEPH W. BELLACOSA\*

Thank you, Becky, and congratulations to you and everyone at the Journal, and thanks to Professor Ettie Ward as your faculty advisor for all that everyone has done in connection with this wonderful program. Special thanks to all of the panelists who are here, who have prepared outstanding presentations and important contributions to our understanding of the subject matter.

On a brief personal note, I was not supposed to be here today at all. In an interesting twist of fate, considering your subject matter is terrorism, I was supposed to be in a magnificent city - all roads lead there - and that was in Rome, Italy. But terrorism and the state of affairs in the world have intruded for a number of reasons and the meeting was cancelled. That allowed me to present here today. If I therefore seem less enthusiastic, I am sure you will all resonate to that with the spirit of the Italians.

Seriously, I am glad to be here to introduce the keynote speaker who is, I think, glad to be here and out of Albany, where he was supposed to be. This appearance provides him with an academic sanctuary from the fiscal woes that are affecting the state. We are very privileged, of course, to have our own alumnus, Michael Balboni, from the class of 1984 to be here to present, as part of this program, the keynote address. He is a model alumnus in a number of ways. His dedication to public service is well known. As a State Senator his interest includes being a very sharp expert now in the subject of today's program. He is also becoming well known in the area as he works on

\* These remarks are an actual transcript of the author's comments at the St. John's Journal of Legal Commentary Symposium on Mar. 14, 2003.

legislation with respect to matters derived from and affected by the terrorism concerns. He has been appointed by the President of the United States to a special commission involving some of these issues and that has got to be a very, very tough assignment in addition to the daily demands of the State Senate responsibilities, fiscal or otherwise. He has written for law reviews on subjects of importance to us and is an adjunct professor at Adelphi University, his other alma mater, which I do not usually recognize. But I am happy for Adelphi as well as St. John's University School of Law that we share Senator Balboni as one of our distinguished alumni. One of his most significant achievements, as someone who has the God-given talent and the experience and commitment that he has, is his election as a four-time Senator of the State of New York. However, I remember him best, not as a Senator or student, but in a very different role as the premier bailiff in one of the most significant courts that has ever sat in New York. A few years ago in 1999, when I was still on the Court of Appeals, just before I came as Dean, I sat on the Father Tinnelly moot court finals; to my right was Chief Judge Judith S. Kaye and to my left, in his only judicial performance so far, was Governor George E. Pataki. This three-member bench was very, very impressed by the extraordinary contributions of the student participants in that final moot court competition. That is the most important part of this story, to tell you how wonderful the students were with their preparation, work and talent. They argued to a Governor, a Chief Judge, and me, in anticipation of coming back to the Law School as Dean. And lo and behold, the person who was our bailiff and timekeeper was no less than Senator Michael Balboni. He reminds me of that role often because it was a wonderful evening that included his special participation as manager of the courtroom. So, this proves one can move from bailiff to being a judge of a distinguished court, an elected official, and other important places. Senator Balboni still has far to go, but for today on behalf of the *Journal of Legal Commentary* and all the students and faculty, and all of the guests who are here, I want to welcome you and invite you to come and present to us your views on this critical subject. I thank you personally for coming back to us time and time again in varying and important roles.