

## CLIENT ALERT

### Plain Meaning Of Statute Restricts Competition

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In *Crane & Co.* (Jan. 18, 2006, <http://www.gao.gov/decisions/bidpro/297398.pdf>), GAO held that the plain language of a 1916 statute limiting to four years contracts for “distinctive currency paper” precluded the Bureau of Engraving and Printing (“BEP”) from encouraging competition by issuing an RFP for four years of production following a two-year “mobilization” period to allow new entrants to make required investments and amortize that investment over the production term of the contract. Recognizing that BEP was attempting to respond to criticisms of the absence of competition, including GAO reports, GAO held it still had to enforce the plain meaning of the statute, anti-competitive as that interpretation was, and the only remedy was for Congress to amend the statute.

For more information, please contact the professional(s) listed below, or your regular Crowell & Moring contact.

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