

Crowell hires from FTC chairwoman's office

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Former Federal Trade Commission adviser Lisa Kimmel has joined Crowell & Moring as senior counsel in its Washington, DC antitrust group, the firm announced yesterday.

Kimmel, a PhD economist as well as a lawyer, has spent much of the last five years as an attorney adviser to FTC commissioner, and now chairwoman, Edith Ramirez, providing counsel on competition policy particularly in the area of intellectual property.

She told *GCR* she expects her training in economics and agency background will be of immense help in her new role: advising clients on government merger and non-merger antitrust investigations and counselling them on complying with competition rules.

“Economics provides the lens for analysing antitrust matters and it’s often the battleground on which cases are fought,” said Kimmel, who until Monday was lead adviser to Ramirez on antitrust policy in the technology sector, including industry standards and assertion of IP rights.

She says her time in the chairwoman’s office has given her insight into the agency process and the perspectives of the five commissioners, as well as the staff. In recent years she advised and drafted speeches for Ramirez in a variety of areas and helped develop the agency’s study of patent-assertion entities – one of Ramirez’s flagship projects as chair.

Crowell & Moring antitrust practice chair Randolph Smith says her arrival adds “regency to our bench of colleagues with specific FTC experience”.

“Lisa’s knowledge and capabilities at the intersection of antitrust and IP is a particularly beneficial asset to our team and our clients,” Smith said in an e-mailed statement.

Before joining the FTC in 2010, Kimmel spent eight years as an associate at Howrey in San Francisco and Washington, DC. Before that she was at Bay Area plaintiffs’ firm Alioto & Alioto. She says that after almost five years in the commission, she was ready for a new challenge.

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"It was a really wonderful experience and a privilege to work for the chairwoman. I am a much better antitrust lawyer as a result of the time I spent there," she says.

Kimmel considered multiple firms, but says in the end she was drawn by Crowell's particular strengths in health care and IP, as well as the chance to work with former colleagues such as Peter Miller, until last month chief privacy officer at the FTC and now a member of Crowell's advertising, product risk, privacy and cybersecurity group.

Kimmel earned her law degree and a doctorate in economics from the University of California, Berkeley.

Her arrival at Crowell comes after a number of lawyers left its Washington, DC office for positions in the federal antitrust authorities. In December partner David Laing left to be senior trial counsel to the FTC, a few months after counsel Brinkley Tappan joined the foreign commerce section of the Department of Justice's antitrust division.