

BROWN GOLDSTEIN LEVY

## Joe Espo



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### Practice Areas

Business Disputes, Civil Litigation, Civil Rights, Defense of Professional Licenses, Fair Housing, Personal Injury/Wrongful Death, Professional Malpractice, Premises Liability, Public Interest Litigation

### Career Milestones

- Obtained the largest settlement the State of Maryland has ever paid to an individual, on behalf of a Baltimore City child abused while in foster care.
- Enjoined the State of Maryland from implementing an exemption to a residential lead-paint safety regulation that would have led to the poisoning of hundreds of children.

### Profile

Joe Espo has devoted much of his career to representing individuals who have suffered serious personal injuries, including brain-damaged children in toxic tort cases, in both Maryland and the District of Columbia. He has represented more than 100 children who were victims of childhood lead poisoning caused by decaying paint in older homes, and successfully challenged a Maryland regulation exempting certain housing repairs from lead-safe work rules. As an outgrowth of his representation of lead-poisoned children, Joe has represented families who have been denied housing because of landlords' concerns of lead-poisoning.

Joe has also represented numerous individuals with disabilities in asserting their rights regarding housing, employment, and access to public accommodations. He successfully represented deaf sports fans in their case against the Washington Redskins' FedEx Field to gain equal access to all aural content, including the lyrics to the music played during the game. Joe's disability rights experience also includes representing clients when hospitals have failed to provide sign language interpreters during the administration of medical care.

A member of the state and federal bars of Maryland and the District of Columbia, Joe has taught Maryland Civil Procedure at the University of Maryland School of Law and taught classes on handling lead poisoning cases for the Maryland Institute for Continuing Education in Law. Before attending law school, Joe was the labor reporter at the Flint (Michigan) Journal.

### Education

University of Maryland School of Law, J.D. with honors, Order of the Coif, 1990  
The American University, B.A., 1985

## Representative Cases

- *Feldman v. Pro Football, Inc.* - secured equal access to all aural content for deaf and hard of hearing sports fans at the Washington Redskins' FedEx Field, 579 F. Supp. 2d 697 (D. Md. 2008), *aff'd*, 419 Fed App'x 381 (4th Cir. 2011).
- *Ford v. Baltimore City Department of Social Services* - obtained settlement of over \$2 million for child seriously injured in foster care (2007).
- *Maurer v. Pennsylvania National Mutual Insurance Co.* - holding that under-insured motorist insurer cannot contest liability after consenting to insured's settlement with at-fault driver, 404 Md. 60, 945 A.2d 629 (2007).
- *Hartzell v. Arkansas* - obtained injunction against State of Arkansas's use of computer software that was not useable by blind employees (2003).
- *Norwest Bank v. Pence* - holding that certain Baltimore City deferred loan agreements are not real estate liens, 363 Md. 267, 768 A.2d 639 (2001).
- *Hines v. Nishida* (Balt. City Cir. Ct.) - invalidating certain Maryland lead paint safety regulations on the grounds they are irrational and do not protect children from harm.
- Defended a dentist in a licensure matter before the Maryland State Dental Board of Examiners.

## Affiliations

- Coalition to End Childhood Lead Poisoning, Past President
- Adoption Resource Center, Past President
- Maryland Association for Justice
- D.C. Trial Lawyers Association

## Media

- November 7, 2011, Sheilah Kast interviewed Joe Espo on WYPR's Maryland Morning with Sheilah Kast regarding the recent Maryland Court of Appeals ruling that changed a 1994 state law regulating how claims of children poisoned by lead-paint are handled in Maryland.