



Ralph Del Deo, Founding Force Behind FBT Gibbons Legacy, Dies at 101

Apr 06, 2026

Categories:

[Press Releases](#)

FBT Gibbons mourns the passing of Ralph N. Del Deo, a founding partner of Crummy, Del Deo, Dolan, Griffinger & Vecchione, one of the legacy firms that helped form Gibbons P.C., which combined with Frost Brown Todd effective January 1, 2026 to create FBT Gibbons. He was 101.

A cornerstone of the firm for four decades, Del Deo practiced in Gibbons' Newark office from 1961 to 2001, advising clients across corporate law, complex litigation, and intellectual property matters, including patent, trademark, and copyright law. Known for his intellectual rigor and steady leadership, he played a central role in building the foundation of what is now FBT Gibbons.

Among his many accomplishments, Del Deo argued the landmark case *Curtiss-Wright Corp. v. General Electric Co.* before the United States Supreme Court in 1980. In a unanimous decision, the Court adopted his arguments regarding the scope of Rule 54(b), securing a significant victory for his client and establishing a precedent that remains a leading authority on the rule today. The case involved high-stakes claims tied to U.S. Navy subcontracting work and ultimately allowed his client to immediately recover a \$19 million judgment, an extraordinary outcome at the time.

Beyond his client work, Del Deo was deeply engaged in the legal profession. He served as a member of the New Jersey Supreme Court Committee on Rules for more than a decade, was a Permanent Delegate to the Third Circuit Judicial Conference and chaired the Third Circuit Lawyers Advisory Committee. He also served on the State of New Jersey Board of Institutional Trustees and was a Fellow of the American Bar Foundation. Over the course of his career, he remained an active member of the Essex County, New Jersey State, and American Bar Associations.

A dog breeder for many years, Del Deo was a judge for numerous dog shows in the United States, England and Spain, including 7 times

at the Westminster Kennel Club in New York, and served as a delegate for the American Kennel Club for over 25 years.

Del Deo earned his LL.B. from Rutgers University School of Law, where he served on the Board of Editors and as Case Editor of the *Rutgers Law Review*, and received his B.A. from Princeton University.

He was predeceased in 2023 by his wife of 75 years, Blanche Wagner Del Deo. He is survived by his four children, Blanche Vilade, Katherine “KT” Catlin, Nicholas Del Deo, and Julia Campazzi, as well as nine grandchildren, 17 great-grandchildren, and two great-great-grandchildren.

About FBT Gibbons

FBT Gibbons LLP is a national law firm focused on serving companies operating and investing in the middle market. With nearly 800 lawyers across 25 offices, the firm is positioned to support clients ranging from large multinationals to mid-sized businesses and growth-oriented startups across the United States. FBT Gibbons provides legal counsel enriched with valuable business and market context, particularly in corporate, litigation, and regulatory matters within the energy, finance, life sciences, and manufacturing sectors. The firm is committed to delivering excellent service to its clients, colleagues, and the communities in which it operates.

© 2026 FBT Gibbons LLP. May be considered attorney advertising in some jurisdictions.