

## **King & Ballow Represents Iraqi Family in Successful Asylum Petition**

By J. Marcel Hernandez

Bruce E. Buchanan of King & Ballow recently assisted in securing asylum for an Iraqi individual and children. Asylum is sought through one of five criterion: race, religion, nationality, political opinion, and membership in a particular social group. In this case, asylum was sought through the areas of religion and membership in particular social groups.

The applicant is a Sunni Muslim while the spouse is Shiite. As a result of this and other factors, the family endured various threats, all of which were substantiated. Furthermore, evidence was presented about the country's history of violence and stories of other families undergoing similar hardship. The spouse also works with organizations perceived by some to have Western ties, which subjected the family to additional threats.

The downfall of Saddam Hussein in 2003 brought about greater conflict between Sunni and Shiite Muslims. With the overthrow of that particular government, the smaller communities were left to police themselves; this led to the renewal of fundamentalist movements, wherein traditionalist ideologies took a stronghold, giving way to the justification of inter-cultural violence.

Nevertheless, through King & Ballow's presentation of such evidence in various exhibits, the family was able to prove a fear that they would be harmed or killed if they were forced to return to Iraq. Their asylum petition was approved this month.