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**Higginbotham and Jeannette Blanton Insurance Agency, Inc.
Unite in Ennis, Texas**

*Merger adds pool building and oil and gas pipeline industry endorsements to
Higginbotham*

FORT WORTH, Texas (June 29, 2017) — Higginbotham announced today that it has partnered with the Jeannette Blanton Insurance Agency, Inc., a branch office of Dallas-based Independent Insurance Group, Inc. that is located in Ennis, Texas. The seven-person office is operated by Jeannette Blanton-Monnat and endorsed by the Association of Pool and Spa Professionals and the San Antonio Pipeliners Association. For Higginbotham, the transaction expands its lineup of industry programs and adds a market to its widening footprint. For Blanton-Monnat, it boosts the agency's breadth of service.

Higginbotham is headquartered in Fort Worth, Texas, and ranked by revenue as the largest independent insurance broker based in the state. Merging with agencies that mirror its business philosophies is part of Higginbotham's long-term growth strategy to increase its geographic span and service scope. Partnering with Jeannette Blanton Insurance Agency does both.

"We're very pleased to have Jeannette and her team join our firm," said Higginbotham President/CEO Rusty Reid. "In addition to establishing a presence in the Ennis market, they bring unparalleled expertise in risks unique to swimming pool contractors and the other highly specialized industries they've been serving for more than 30 years. We're excited about the prospects of combining their capabilities with Higginbotham's statewide reach and market clout."

Blanton-Monnat said, "As my agency grew, I started looking for a partner structured for growth that could provide far more resources for my clients, and more important, that could match our high customer service standards. I found it in Higginbotham. The support I can now offer my clients for risk management, contract review, employee benefits and personal insurance will allow me to grow without sacrificing service or our dedication to the industries where we have coverage expertise."

(more)



Blanton-Monnat's existing staff will remain in Ennis, and Independent Insurance Group will continue operating in Dallas under the leadership of her two former remaining partners.

About Jeannette Blanton Insurance Agency, Inc.

Jeannette Blanton Insurance Agency, Inc. is owned by Jeannette Blanton-Monnat and affiliated with Independent Insurance Group, Inc., an agency she founded in 1993 with four partners in Dallas. She opened a branch office in Ennis, Texas, in 2002. Her office brokers commercial property/casualty insurance primarily to contractors of all types.

About Higginbotham

Higginbotham is a single source for insurance and financial services that brokers business insurance, employee benefits, retirement plans, executive benefits, life insurance and home/auto insurance from more than 250 regional and national carriers. It supplements coverage with in-house risk management and benefit plan administration services. The firm was founded in 1948 and is headquartered in Fort Worth, Texas, with 26 additional offices statewide serving domestic and international customers. Higginbotham ranks by revenue as the nation's 31st largest independent insurance brokerage firm, making it the largest Texas-based broker (*Business Insurance*, July 2016). Visit www.higginbotham.net for more information.

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