



The Relentless Pursuit of Results

HENRY BASKIN **Biography**

Henry Baskin has seen a generation of changes in family law and entertainment where he has focused his practice since the late 1960s. Baskin pioneered legislation and continues to try cases that reflect the new realities of modern life, parenting and divorce. He is a well known entertainment attorney who represented the emerging stars of Motown and the media celebrities of Detroit's TV and radio scene. Baskin is at home whether he is representing a television newscaster in a contract negotiation or an anonymous adolescent in a groundbreaking DNA issue. He has steered the dichotomies of his far-ranging practice through the technological explosion of the television and recording industries and the social evolution of blended families, which have altered our culture.

The Baskin Law Firm, PC is based in Birmingham, Michigan, located in Oakland County, one of the nation's leading counties. Henry Baskin's achievements, distinctions and professional activities are many. He has served his state judiciary and government leaders at its highest levels. He has contributed to the development and growth of his profession through years of service with the State Bar of Michigan. He has championed the importance of education at Michigan's universities. He has served charitable causes with his time and treasure.

FAMILY LAW

As one of Michigan's top family practice attorneys, Baskin has earned a lifetime achievement award from the Michigan Bar Association for his work in family law. He served as an advisor to Michigan Attorney General Mike Cox as an expert on issues related to child support. His lasting legacies in this field include his status as principal author of the Michigan Child Custody Act of 1970, which continues to be leading legislation for resolving custody issues. It has served as benchmark legislation not only in Michigan but across the country.

Baskin is also known for his work in domestic violence legislation, which began under former Governor John Engler. As chairman of the state's Domestic Violence Task Force, endangered women and children have been granted an increased level of safety and security through Personal Protection Orders. Baskin authored and was instrumental in bringing about that legislation, which is now considered a benchmark in this and other states.

Baskin stood at the forefront of lawyers nationwide when he proved that it is possible to place a value on a wife's services to her family. That value figures into a formula to assure her parity in comparison to her husband's contributions in a divorce. For more than 15 years, Baskin served as a member and a chairperson of the Michigan Judicial Tenure Commission that monitors judges'

conduct. Former Governor Engler also appointed him commissioner of the Trial Court Assessment Commission for the State of Michigan.

ENTERTAINMENT LAW

Baskin has been making a mark on the metro Detroit entertainment community for decades. His early work in entertainment law put him at the center of the Detroit music, radio and television scene, representing Motown icons, including Marvin Gaye, The Temptations, Martha and the Vandellas and The Miracles. He was one of the original founders of the Detroit Chapter of the National Academy of Television Arts & Sciences. At one time, Baskin has represented virtually all of Detroit's on-air television talent including Bill Bonds, Jack LeGoff, Marilyn Turner, John Kelly, Joe Glover and Beverly Payne. Currently, Baskin represents, or has represented, some of the areas most popular and respected talent, including Huel Perkins (*WJBK-FOX2*), Jerry Hodak (*WXYZ-TV7*), Fanchon Stinger (*WJBK-FOX2*), Glenn Haege (Handyman Show), Dick Purtan (*WOMC-104.3 FM*), Alan Frank (*WDIV-TV4*), JoAnne Purtan (*WXYZ-TV7*), and John Mason of "Mason in the Morning" fame and PR announcer for the Detroit Pistons.

EDUCATION

Henry Baskin has seen what can happen in single-parent households when mothers have no access to child support and when fathers are not required to contribute to the cost of their children's education. With a \$500,000 gift to Oakland University, he created the Baskin Family Foundation to provide scholarship assistance to children of single-parent households in financial need. The scholarships cover tuition and all education-related expenses for the College of Arts and Sciences' Judaic Studies program. The gift was designed to expand understanding of a culture and religion that has had a significant historical impact on the world.

Baskin was appointed first by Governor John Engler and again by Governor Jennifer Granholm to serve on the Oakland University Board of Trustees. He has served on the board for 12 years, held the post of chairperson for 2 years, and is currently vice chairperson. Baskin is a member of the Board of Visitors at his alma mater, Wayne State University Law School, as well as a member of the school's Anthony Wayne Society. He is the recipient of an honorary doctorate from Central Michigan University. He was an adjunct professor of law at the University of Detroit-Mercy Law School. Baskin has also written extensively on the topic of divorce law and presents seminars on the subject, based on his work with family protection legislation.

LEGISLATIVE ACTIVIST

Baskin has earned a reputation both inside and outside the legal community as an avid activist for legislative causes. He has testified as an expert on family law issues before the Michigan Senate and House and before Congress. Baskin is an advisor to Attorney General Mike Cox, specializing in child support issues. He penned the influential Michigan Custody Act of 1970, which remains a nationally-recognized standard for resolving custody issues. He authored and brought forth another important advancement in the form of Personal Protection Orders, which have become a benchmark in Michigan and other states. Most recently, Baskin was certified by the NBA

Players Association to serve as a licensed player agent. He continues to build on a long career that spans many professional arenas.

FIRSTS

Baskin has forged ahead at the forefront of many issues throughout his legal career. Consider his “firsts:”

- Handled Michigan’s first bi-racial custody case
- Tried the first grandparent custody case
- First attorney to change standard music contracts, anticipating the addition of music videos and the issue of a musician’s intellectual property rights
- Tried the first Michigan cases involving a Vietnamese mother and grandparents whose children were being taken away and placed for adoption
- Enforced the first religious divorce case in a Michigan Civil Court
- Sued a Rhode Island governor on the issue of paternity
- Tried the first case in which a husband attempted to gain a portion of the value of his wife’s medical degree
- Michigan’s first major entertainment lawyer

CHARITY AFFILIATIONS

Family and children’s charities dominate Baskin’s philanthropic activities. Among them are:

- Easter Seals Foundation
- Muscular Dystrophy Foundation
- Child Abuse and Neglect Council (Oakland County)
- Founder and Director of the Family AIDS Network
- Director, Association Against Children’s Substance Abuse
- Children’s Leukemia Foundation
- National Multiple Sclerosis Society
- Horizon’s Upward Bound
- The Settlement Center
- Founder, Mental Illness Research Association
- Board – WTVS T.V.
- Vice President, Variety of Michigan

HONORS

Named as one of the “Ten Most Influential Lawyers in Michigan” by *Lawyer’s Weekly*, and listed for 15 consecutive years in *Best Lawyers in America*, Baskin has received many other distinctions:

- National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences, Silver Circle Award
- State Bar of Michigan’s Champion of Justice Award
- Wade H. McCree Media Award for the Advancement of Justice
- State Bar of Michigan Family Law Section’s Lifetime Achievement Award
- Wayne State University’s Distinguished Alumni Award
- Distinguished Service Award of the Michigan Kidney Foundation

- Child Abuse and Neglect Council of Oakland County Awards
- Vice President of Variety – The Children’s Charity, Detroit Chapter

HONORS (continued)

- Top Divorce Lawyer, *Hour Magazine*
- Super Lawyers, *Detroit News*
- Merry-Go-Round CARE House, Garnet Award
- Variety – The Children’s Charity of Detroit, Dream Catcher’s Award
- The Department of Justice, Outstanding Service to Victims Award
- Founder of the National Academy of Television Arts & Sciences, Detroit Chapter
- State Bar of Michigan’s Champion of Justice Award
- Founder, The American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers, Detroit Chapter

STATE BAR OF MICHIGAN

- Commissioner of the State Bar of Michigan
- Co-chair of the State Bar’s Judicial Qualifications Committee
- Past president of State Bar’s Family Law Section
- Member of State Bar’s Task Force on Substance Abuse
- Past President of the 3,000-member Oakland County Bar Association

DUE PROCESS

Before Greta Van Susteren and Nancy Grace, there was Henry Baskin. He hosted one of Detroit’s longest running public affairs shows, “Due Process,” which aired on *WDIV-TV Channel 4* (NBC affiliate). Every other week, he gathered a blend of attorneys and experts from the community to offer advice on legal issues, such as suing your doctor, filing a grievance against your landlord, understanding the rights of the elderly, child custody issues, drunk driving and patent law. Experts talked about a topic in understandable ways that sparked a lot of calls and letters. Guests included Jack Kevorkian (assisted suicide activist), Jennifer Granholm (future Governor of Michigan) and F. Lee Bailey (infamous attorney). The series was also re-broadcast on public TV stations statewide. Baskin has almost as much radio and TV airtime as his clients. He has subbed for hosts on radio shows and has commented about prominent trials in TV and newspaper interviews. “Due Process” currently airs on *Channel 56 WTVS*.

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