



Contacts:

For Alera: Jessica Tiller, Weiss PR, Inc.

Email: jtiller@weisspr.com

Phone: 443-451-7144

For Genstar: Chris Tofalli, Chris Tofalli Public Relations, LLC

Email: chris@tofallipr.com

Phone: 914-834-4334

John O'Connell, President 860-990-6344

Local C.M. Smith Agency Joins 23 U.S. Financial Services Firms to Create the Alera Group

A historical M&A deal brings national insurance and financial services resources to local clients

Hartford, CT (January 4, 2017)—C.M. Smith Agency has joined 23 other entrepreneurial insurance and financial services companies across the United States to form Alera Group, an employee benefits, property/casualty, risk management and wealth management firm with approximately \$158 million in revenue. The new firm has more than 750 employees serving more than 20,000 clients in 40 U.S. based offices across 15 states. This merger marks the first time that 24 financial services firms have joined together as one.

C.M. Smith Agency will continue to offer employee benefits brokerage and consulting, now with an extensive network of national resources and thought leadership. All of C. M. Smith's employees and advisors will continue to operate as C.M. Smith Agency out of the firm's existing offices. It will continue to be led by John O'Connell, CEBS, CLU.

Addressing a Need for Better Client Service

"Our clients' needs are changing and, frankly, our industry has been slow to respond," said Alan Levitz, president and CEO of Alera Group. "That's why we brought together this hand-picked group. Clients will see two benefits rarely delivered by a single organization. First, they will get the combined resources, technical experience and best practices of a larger firm. Second, they will continue to receive the personal service and independent decision-making power of a local business. Our goal is to set a new, higher standard for their experience."

"This new partnership will allow C.M. Smith Agency to elevate its client services, grow its expertise and offer more thought leadership to the local market—all while staying true to our cornerstones of being trusted advisors in our community," said John O'Connell, leader, C.M. Smith Agency. "We are thrilled to be a part of history, as we join Alera Group with like-minded firms that are dedicated to an exceptional client experience."

A Powerful, Sizable Combination

With investment from Genstar Capital, LLC, a leading middle market private equity firm, and brokerage assistance from consulting and investment banking firm Marsh, Berry & Company, Inc., Alera Group will become the 14th largest privately held insurance firm and 7th largest privately



held employee benefits firm nationally. Industry veterans Alan Levitz, Peter Marathas and Rob Lieblein will be serving in key leadership roles within Alera Group. The trio brings a combined 75 years in the insurance and financial services industry to the new organization.

Terms of the transaction were not disclosed.

About C.M. SMITH

C.M. Smith Agency, Inc., located in Hartford, CT, provides businesses with a broad range of employee benefits, brokerage, consulting, and data analytic services. C.M. Smith is recognized for innovative perspectives and thought leadership in the fields of health care, health insurance, and employee benefits. For more information, visit www.cmsmith.com.

About Alera Group

Based in Deerfield, IL, Alera Group has more than 750 employees serving more than 20,000 clients nationally in employee benefits, property/casualty, risk management and wealth management. Alera Group was created by the merging of 24 high-performing, entrepreneurial firms across the United States and is the nation's 14th largest independent insurance agency and the 7th largest independent employee benefits firm. For more information, visit www.aleragroup.com or follow Alera Group on Social Media: @AleraGroupUS

About Genstar Capital

Genstar Capital is a leading private equity firm that has been actively investing in high quality companies for more than 20 years. Based in San Francisco, Genstar works in partnership with its management teams and its network of operating executives and strategic advisors to transform its portfolio companies into industry leading businesses. Genstar manages funds with total capital commitments of over \$5 billion and targets investments focused on selected sectors within the financial services, industrial technology, software and healthcare industries. For more information, visit www.gencap.com.