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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Bill Ghent Insurance Agency, LLC Announces New Ownership and Partnership**

The longstanding and trusted Bill Ghent Insurance Inc. proudly announces its new ownership structure and rebranding as Bill Ghent Insurance Agency, LLC, solidifying its commitment to providing exceptional insurance services to the community. This exciting partnership brings together Ryan Patton & Jessica Patton, owners of Howell Insurance, and First Eldorado Bancshares, uniting their shared dedication to protecting their customers and strengthening their presence in the region. In addition to this new partnership, the staff at Bill Ghent Insurance Agency, LLC includes several familiar faces, such as Cheri Golish, Kathy Stevens, and Linda Sanders, as well as some new, but highly experienced team members, including Kevin McFarland and Ryan Patton.

"This partnership represents the alignment of two trusted and respected organizations with deep community roots. By joining forces with Ryan and Jessica Patton, we are expanding our ability to provide comprehensive solutions to our customers while maintaining the exceptional level of service they have come to expect. This is a significant step forward in fulfilling our mission to serve and strengthen the communities we call home," said Martin B. Rowe, President and CEO of First Eldorado Bancshares, Inc.

The Patton family brings deep roots and decades of experience in the insurance industry. Howell Insurance, founded in 1925 by Ryan's great-grandfather, represents four generations of family leadership. Ryan and Jessica purchased Howell Insurance in 2021 from Ryan's mother, Susan, who continues to work in the agency. Ryan's father, Spunky Patton, contributed to the agency's legacy until his passing in 2008.

Ryan Patton, who joined the family business in 2010 after earning his MBA from Southern Illinois University Carbondale, brings a wealth of expertise. As an independent agency, Howell Insurance represents multiple insurance companies, allowing them to provide tailored solutions for clients, including property, casualty, life, and health insurance. Their ability to match clients with competitive markets across various industries—such as agriculture, construction, and manufacturing—reflects their dedication to being customer-focused. Ryan states, "We are stronger together than we are alone. This partnership reflects that belief and brings together the expertise, history, and shared values of both agencies. Our combined resources will enable us to provide even better experiences for our customers."

With roots dating back to 1909, Bill Ghent Insurance Inc. has always called Main Street in Harrisburg home. Known for its reputation of fighting for clients, this legacy of exceptional service will continue under the new partnership. Ryan Patton shares, "Spunky Patton and Bill Ghent were close friends, and their agencies worked

together on numerous accounts over the years. This partnership honors that history while setting us on a path for growth."

Kevin Beckemeyer, President/CEO of Legence Bank, states, "This partnership embodies our commitment to serving the communities where we live and work. By bringing together two respected agencies, we are ensuring the continuation of exceptional service and expanding opportunities for growth. We're proud to be part of a collaboration that values community, trust, and excellence."

### **A Community-Focused Future**

This new chapter will maintain the agencies' deep-rooted presence in the community and their dedication to protecting customers. With their shared history and combined expertise, the partnership of Howell Insurance, Bill Ghent Insurance Agency LLC, and First Eldorado Bancshares represents a powerful force for continued success. This partnership not only ensures a seamless customer experience but also underscores a shared commitment to strengthening and investing in the communities both companies serve.

**For more information about Bill Ghent Insurance Agency, LLC, its new ownership, and its services, please contact:**

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