



Adrian F. Snead

partner

Adrian is a partner in the Washington, D.C. office and a member of the firm's Government & Regulatory Affairs and Litigation Practice Groups. He has over a decade of experience in all three branches of government, as a litigator, and as a corporate counsel to a Fortune 10 technology company. His practice focuses on government and regulatory challenges, complex litigation, and emerging industries such as cloud computing and cannabis.

Adrian believes in partnering with his clients and diving deep to understand their businesses, goals and legal needs.

With a bias for action, he delivers maximum value through innovative and efficient solutions. Adrian helps clients see around corners to protect their business and maximize opportunities.

Adrian's leading experience is in litigation, the legislative process, political strategy, and policy development and analysis. He counsels clients on how to work with the federal government, primarily congress and the executive branch. Adrian focuses on appropriations, emerging technology, homeland security, military and veterans' affairs, privacy policy, and cannabis banking and reform.

He also advises clients on and litigates complex business and contract disputes, conflicts with foreign sovereigns, white collar defense, and national security matters. Adrian's experience includes work in federal and state civil and criminal trials, domestic and international arbitrations, and mediations. He was part of the trial team that claimed victories over Guatemala and Iraq in both international and domestic fora. Adrian has represented a wide array of clients from government contractors to former CIA station chiefs.

Policy strategy and advocacy

Adrian served as counsel and foreign policy advisor to U.S. Sen. Jeff Merkley (D-Ore.), holding a Top Secret clearance. He handled portions of the Senator's Appropriations and Banking committee assignments. Adrian

CONTACT

asnead@porterwright.com
202.778.3023
www.porterwright.com

Pronouns: he / him / his

2020 K Street, NW
Suite 600
Washington, DC 20006

EDUCATION

The George Washington University
Law School, J.D., 2011

The University of Texas at Austin,
B.A., *with high honors*, 2006

LANGUAGES

- Spanish, *proficient*

SERVICES

Government & Regulatory Affairs

- Legislative advocacy
- Regulatory advocacy
- Administrative advocacy

also served as the Personal Representative of the Member (PRM) to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and as Senator Merkley's Military Legislative Assistant, handling all military and national security issues for the office. In that role, Adrian traveled extensively with Senator Merkley as part of international congressional delegations to conduct oversight of international programs and engage diplomatically with foreign governments. His portfolio also included cannabis banking and reform, privacy, civil rights, criminal justice, veterans, immigration, campaign finance, and international sanctions.

Adrian had a proven track record of drafting important legislation, building bipartisan, bicameral coalitions, and passing legislation through the Senate. In his time with Sen. Merkley, Adrian helped draft the Senate Democrats' marquee civil rights legislation—the Equality Act of 2015. Adrian was principally responsible for drafting the Marijuana Businesses Access to Banking Act of 2015, SAFE Banking Act of 2017, and several cannabis-related appropriations amendments. He also founded the Senate Staff Working Group on Cannabis Reform and worked with federal agencies, including the Department of Defense, the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Justice Department to sway policy.

Adrian serves as a lecturer at The University of Texas System's Archer Center, which brings students from across the System to Washington for courses and internships. Adrian teaches a section on Congress and the legislative process.

Adrian was the lead counsel reviewing and editing several congressional amicus briefs that Sen. Merkley led. These include *Hively v. Ivy Tech Community College* in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit, arguing that LGBTQ status is included under the definition of "sex" in Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and *The New York Times Company v. United States Department of Justice* in the Second Circuit, arguing for release under the Freedom of Information Act of a number of Department of Justice Office of Legal Counsel memoranda related to targeted drone strikes, including one that involved strikes against American citizens.

National security matters

As a judicial law clerk to the Honorable Royce C. Lamberth of the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia, Adrian held a Top Secret/SCI security clearance to handle national security cases. He drafted dozens of opinions and orders resolving motions in criminal, civil and national security cases. These included issues ranging from discovery disputes to Guantanamo Bay detainees' access to counsel.

During law school, he served as a White House intern in the Domestic Policy Council and spent over a year interning at the Department of Justice in both the civil rights and criminal divisions.

As a first-generation American, Adrian takes pride in civil rights work and supporting minority communities facing difficult legal issues. He is a longtime member of the Hispanic National Bar Association.

SERVICES (CONTINUED)

Litigation

- Arbitration and mediation
- Class actions, mass torts and MDLs
- Commercial litigation
- Non-competition and trade secrets litigation
- Unmanned and autonomous systems (Drones and driverless vehicles)
- Regulatory and administrative law

Investigations, White Collar Defense & Shareholder Litigation

Cannabis

REPRESENTATIVE MATTERS

Litigation

- Represented a plaintiff government contractor in *Wye Oak Technology, Inc. v. Republic of Iraq and Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Iraq*, a breach of contract case against the post-Saddam Iraqi government; client received an approximate \$89 million award after a bench trial
- Represented more than two dozen members of the U.S. House and U.S. Senate in an amicus brief in *Hemp Industry Association, et al. v. Drug Enforcement Administration, et al.*, a Ninth Circuit appeal of U.S. Drug and Enforcement Administration rulemaking related to hemp
- Represented approximately 600 plaintiffs in a Louisiana environmental tort mass action against a landfill and the local parish
- Represented a plaintiff illegally imprisoned for nearly three years in a 42 U.S.C. § 1983 civil rights case against the District of Columbia
- Represented a plaintiff in a medical malpractice case where a hospital stereotyped a young African American male and provided substandard treatments, resulting in lifelong paralysis
- Represented a defendant in a federal white collar criminal matter
- Represented a billion-dollar government contractor in a multimillion-dollar business conspiracy case, which ended with a favorable settlement for the client
- Represented a plaintiff in a business dispute among partners, which resulted in a successful mediation
- Represented a New York real estate investor in an International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) arbitration related to a faulty HVAC system, which ended with a favorable settlement for the client
- Represented three senior ex-CIA officers as plaintiffs in an arbitration against a billionaire involving breach of contract related to Iraqi oil, which resulted in a favorable award for the clients
- Represented a plaintiff in *Railroad Development Corporation v. Republic of Guatemala*, the first investor-state arbitration brought pursuant to the Central American Free Trade Agreement and heard at the World Bank's International Centre for the Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID), which ended with favorable award for the client

BAR ADMISSIONS

- District of Columbia
- New York
- Texas
- U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia
- U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York

PRESENTATIONS

- "The More Things Change, the More They Stay the Same: Employment Law in Ohio After Adult-Use Cannabis Legalization," Porter Wright Employment Relations Seminar, Oct. 31, 2023
- "What Corporate Counsel and Investment Counsel Need to Know About Structuring Deals and Financing" New York State Bar Association Annual Meeting and Expo, Jan. 28, 2020
- "Hemp, CBD Oil and the Farm Bills of 2014 and 2018," Credit Union National Association BSA/AML Certification Conference, Nov. 21, 2019
- "The Money Problem: Banking and Investing in Cannabis," Business Insurance Cannabis & Hemp Conference, Oct. 24, 2019
- "In Legal Limbo: Federal Cannabis Laws at the Crossroads," American Bar Association Conference, Sept. 19, 2019

- “Cannabis and Hemp Banking,” National Credit Union Administration Examination Issues Forum: Federal Update, Aug. 6, 2019
- “State Cannabis Legalization: Today and Tomorrow,” National Association of State Credit Union Systems, June 2019
- “Current Issues in Cannabis Law and Policy,” American Bar Association Cannabis Law & Policy Committee Symposium, May 2019
- “Cannabis Law & Policy Discussion,” Cannabis World Congress and Business Expo, June 2017

PUBLICATIONS

- “Banking marijuana business: A primer on this emerging field,” *The Judges' Journal*, American Bar Association, January 2021
- “Accounts that go up in smoke: To bank or not to bank,” *The Marijuana Industry*, American Bar Association, Jan. 22, 2020
- “Bitten by a police dog, shot by a police officer, and sexually assaulted by a corrections officer,” Short Circuit Podcast Ep. 112, Institute For Justice, Aug. 2, 2019

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

- American Bar Association, Committee on Cannabis Law & Policy, Vice Chair, 2019–2022
- Hispanic National Bar Association
- Hispanic Bar Association of the District of Columbia

HONORS | AWARDS

- National Law Journal, Hill Hot List, 2015

COMMUNITY

- Hispanic National Bar Association & Alliance of Latino Leadership & Policy, Presidential Appointments Vetting Committee, 2020 and 2021
- Winchester Unit Owners Association, President, 2020-2022
- GW Latino Law Alumni Association, Board Member, 2015-present
- Hispanic National Bar Association, Annual Convention Career Fair, Co-Chair, 2014
- Hispanic Law Students Association, Vice President, 2009-2011