



John S. Guttman

Principal

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John represents companies in complex, high-stakes toxic tort, product liability, and environmental litigation.

He has served in leading roles in litigation matters with potential damages/awards in the billions of dollars and has secured dismissal or reduction of claims in numerous matters that have saved clients millions of dollars. By blending regulatory, transactional, and litigation expertise (including representation of clients as plaintiffs) into an integrated whole, John offers clients the benefit of all three perspectives in charting a course of action that is most advantageous for their businesses.

John serves as lead national counsel for a petroleum refiner in all MTBE product liability litigation and has been a member of the defense steering committee for the refining industry in those cases. He led a team that successfully defended a public water utility in multiple cases claiming health effects due to alleged lead exposure. The court relied upon John's arguments in denying class certification in the first of those cases. This moved the entire docket towards a quick resolution favorable to our client.

John devotes a substantial part of his practice to the defense of natural resource damages (NRD) cases brought by trustees. He currently represents defendants in NRD litigation brought by four different sovereigns.

Other examples of his environmental litigation experience include serving as lead counsel in cases arising under NEPA, RCRA, CERCLA, and the Clean Air Act. These matters have included cases pending in various federal trial and appellate courts, cases before the Department of Interior Board of Land Appeals, and administrative enforcement actions at EPA.

John's litigation experience also includes indemnity litigation, securities class actions, breach of fiduciary duty claims, directors and officers liability suits, complex contract cases, unfair competition cases, and health insurance matters. He also has represented several clients in SEC enforcement proceedings.

Before joining the firm, John served as a law clerk for Judge Aubrey E. Robinson, Jr. of the United States District of Columbia. He has served in numerous firm leadership positions, including as Managing Principal, and is Chair of the firm's Pro Bono Committee.

John has held leadership positions in a number of organizations. He currently serves as Chair of the Defense Research Institute's (DRI) Center for Law and Public Policy's Management Council, and

was the former National Director of DRI and Chair of its Toxic Tort and Environmental Law Committee. John is General Counsel and member of the Board of Directors of NAEM (formerly the National Association for Environmental Management), and Chair of the Board of Directors of the C&O Canal Trust, which is the official nonprofit partner of the C&O Canal National Historic Park. John is also a member of the International Association of Defense Counsel, an invitation-only organization of approximately 2,500 defense attorneys worldwide.

In addition, he has spoken on topics related to environmental litigation at meetings sponsored by the Defense Research Institute, the American Bar Association, the District of Columbia Bar, the New York City Bar Association, and the Environmental Law Institute as well as at the annual NRD conference in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

John is a Fellow in the Litigation Counsel of America and a Fellow of the American Bar Foundation.

Education

- University of Pennsylvania (B.A., *cum laude*, 1975)
- Cornell University (J.D., 1978)

Bar Admissions

- District of Columbia
- New York

Court Admissions

- U.S. Supreme Court
- U.S. Court of Federal Claims
- U.S. Court of Appeals - D.C. Circuit
- U.S. Court of Appeals - Second Circuit
- U.S. Court of Appeals - Fifth Circuit
- U.S. District Court - District of Columbia
- U.S. District Court - Maryland
- U.S. District Court - Eastern District of New York
- U.S. District Court - Northern District of New York
- U.S. District Court - Southern District of New York

Professional Affiliations

- American Bar Association
- Lawyers for Civil Justice

Honors & Awards

- *The Best Lawyers in America*®, a Best Lawyers® publication, recognition in Environmental Litigation and Mass Tort Litigation / Class Actions - Defendants (2015-2025, 2024-2025)
- *The Best Lawyers in America*®, a Best Lawyers® publication, Environmental Litigation "Lawyer of the Year" in Washington, DC (2022)
- *The Best Lawyers in America*®, a Best Lawyers® publication, Mass Tort Litigation "Lawyer of the Year" in Washington, DC (2020)
- *Super Lawyers, part of Thomson Reuters*, Washington, DC, Super Lawyer (2015-2020, 2022-2024)
- *Super Lawyers, part of Thomson Reuters*, New York Super Lawyer (2016-2024)
- Recognition in *Who's Who Legal – Environment & Climate*, a publication of Lexology (2017-2020, 2022-2024)
- *The Legal 500*, recognition in Environmental Litigation and Regulatory Law (2019-2023)
- *The Legal 500*, recognition in Environmental Litigation (2024)