



Kenneth O. Corley

Partner

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About

Managing partner of Kelley Drye's Houston office and a skilled and seasoned trial attorney, Kenny Corley brings more than 18 years of deep and varied litigation experience to his representation of private companies and government entities in environmental, business, and energy disputes.

Kenny's nationwide practice in federal and state courts is both broad-based and intensely focused, with his advocacy equally effective in contentious commercial matters and those involving allocating responsibility for natural resource contamination, remediation, or other liability for both plaintiffs and defendants.

Kenny's clients span industries and jurisdictions across the country, including state governments and agencies, ports, energy sector companies, major transportation corporations, terminal railways, landowners, and businesses ranging from large multinational companies to start-ups and early-stage enterprises.

In his environmental litigation practice, Kenny represents states in public nuisance litigation arising from polychlorinated biphenyl (PCB) contamination and serves governmental and industry clients dealing with challenges resulting from PFAS, PFOS, and AFFF contamination.

His government representation includes establishing liability against responsible parties following complex corporate restructurings. He has served as lead litigation counsel for states or other governmental entities in connection with environmental contamination and natural resource damages, resulting in favorable court rulings and settlements worth tens of millions of dollars.

Kenny also played an instrumental role in litigation concerning dioxin contamination of a major waterway, resulting in a settlement worth hundreds of millions of dollars. Kenny has also achieved positive outcomes in various land use and lease disputes involving land and water contamination.

Kenny's extensive commercial litigation experience includes actions involving complex contract disputes, energy-related litigation and royalty disputes, fraudulent transfer and alter ego claims, negligence, personal injury, fraud, tortious interference, defamation, trade secret and noncompetition disputes, partnership disputes, director and officer liability, and real estate disputes, including jury verdicts in favor of his clients. He has done substantial work representing parties in a broad array of land use-related litigation and counseling matters, including arbitrations and settlements involving tens of millions of dollars awarded to his clients.

Consistently recognized by his peers for his professional accomplishments, integrity, and work ethic, Kenny is active in his community, volunteering his time and efforts to several religious, educational, and charitable organizations.

Experience

Obtained a multimillion dollar arbitration liability award against a major energy company for underpayment of royalties, including declaratory relief concerning future deductions of post-production expenses.

Obtained a complete defense jury verdict in favor of an real estate developer in Galveston County District Court after nearly two weeks of trial. The jury verdict resolved a multimillion-dollar limited partnership dispute over a failed real estate development south of Houston. Successfully achieved dismissal of appeal.

Successfully led PCB litigation against Monsanto, including oral arguments on behalf of the San Diego Unified Port District, preserving liability and damages claims for PCB contamination of San Diego Bay, ultimately resulting in \$550 million class action settlement.

Conducted oral arguments on behalf of North Carolina in litigation against DuPont and Chemours for contamination of the Cape Fear River.

Defended several petrochemical industry clients against an EPA RCRA enforcement action and advised the companies regarding compliance protocols.

Defended numerous CERCLA potentially responsible parties and defendants against contribution claims in contaminated oil recovery site.

Successfully defended CERCLA cost-recovery claims against a railroad, resulting in the dismissal of all claims on summary judgment.

Served on a team representing the state of New Jersey in historic litigation concerning the contamination of the Passaic River, resulting in one of the most significant cost-recovery and damages settlements ever obtained.

Represented a public entity in fraudulent transfer, alter ego and corporate misconduct claims against various multinational entities involving a myriad of complex international finance and accounting transactions.

Represented a major energy client in a hotly contested fraud, breach of contract, theft and business disparagement litigation.

In multiple cases, accomplished various injunctions preventing diminution or transfer of assets held by the defendants in several fraudulent transfer, fraud and theft liability actions.

Represented local and multinational entities in personal injury and wrongful death lawsuits.

Obtained a unanimous jury verdict in a breach of contract and fraud trial.

Honors

Recommended in *US Legal 500* for his work in the Environment Litigation area, 2020-2023.

Recognized as a Rising Star by Thomson Reuters for Texas *Super Lawyers* since 2010.

Affiliations

The Arbor School (arbor.org), board of trustees, 2015

Related Services

Environmental
Energy
Environmental Litigation
Environmental Regulation
Public Sector and Government Entities
Land Use
Condemnation and Eminent Domain
Natural Resource Damages
PFAS and Emerging Contaminants
Ports
Railroads
Commercial Litigation

Education

South Texas College of Law, J.D., 2004

- cum laude
- South Texas Law Review, Dean's Outstanding Student Advocate Award, ABA and ATLA Moot Court National Champion and Best Oral Advocate

University of Arizona, B.A., 1998

Admissions

Texas, 2005

Arizona, 2005

Courts

U.S. District Court–Southern District of Texas

U.S. District Court–Eastern District of Texas

U.S. District Court–District of Arizona