

J. Timothy Hobbs

Partner

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OVERVIEW

Tim is a litigator and strategic legal advisor. He has litigated and won a wide range of cases before federal and state courts and other tribunals across the country.

Clients retain Tim as lead counsel for complex disputes involving constitutional issues, preemption of state and local laws by various federal laws, antitrust claims, and environmental and regulatory challenges. Tim has also litigated matters before the Department of Commerce, Department of Transportation, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, Environmental Protection Agency, and various state agencies.

In addition to litigation, Tim frequently helps clients develop novel regulatory and legislative initiatives to solve complex problems with creative solutions.

Tim also advises clients in the fishing and seafood industry on regulatory issues, litigation, and transactions involving the acquisition or sale of vessels or fishing quotas. Before entering the legal profession, Tim worked for several years in the field of fisheries conservation. He was appointed as a technical advisor to the US delegation to the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT), appointed to federal advisory panels on fisheries, and testified before Congress on fisheries legislation.

ACHIEVEMENTS

- Recognized by *Chambers USA* for Environment in Tennessee, 2026

SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

- Speaker, “Federal Policy, Regulatory, and Litigation Changes Impacting the Fisheries and Aquaculture Industries,” Seafood Expo North America, 2026

EDUCATION

- J.D., University of Washington School of Law, 2006 *with honors, Articles Editor, Washington Law Review*
- B.A., Whitman College, 1999

ADMISSIONS

- Bar of District of Columbia
- Bar of Tennessee
- Bar of Virginia
- Bar of Washington
- Supreme Court of the United States
- United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit
- United States Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit
- United States Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit
- United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit
- United States Court of Appeals for the First Circuit
- United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit
- United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit
- United States Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit
- United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit
- United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia
- United States District Court for the Eastern District of Wisconsin
- United States District Court for the Western District of Washington

THOUGHT LEADERSHIP *POWERED BY HUB*

- 30 June 2026, Supreme Court Expands Presidential Control Over Independent Agencies: Key Takeaways for Regulated Businesses
- 26 November 2025, Supreme Court to Redefine the President's Power to Fire Independent Agency Heads: Implications for Business
- 25 November 2025, Quick Guide: Independent Regulatory Agencies
- 9 October 2025, The Essential Guide to the Jones Act
- 1 October 2025, First-Ever Fisheries Subsidies Agreement Enters Into Force at the World Trade Organization
- 8 September 2025, Upcoming Tennessee Rule Changes Will Create Clarity and Cost Savings for Managing Contaminated Soil on Construction and Development Sites

- 2 September 2025, Angling for New Ideas: NOAA Fisheries Seeks Public Comment on Boosting American Seafood Competitiveness
- 25 February 2025, Trump Administration Asserts Control Over Independent Agencies
- November 2022, The Blue Economy: The Role of Ports in Developing Sustainable Marine Industries
- 14 June 2021, Shipping Emissions Remain a Focus of Reintroduced House Bill
- 3 June 2021, D.C. Circuit Affirms That Offshore Wind Lease Does Not Trigger NEPA Review
- October 2020, Blue Economy Handbook
- 28 August 2020, NOAA Identifies the First Two Aquaculture Opportunity Areas to Facilitate Expansion of Aquaculture in Federal Waters
- 2 July 2020, COVID-19: Renewed and Unique Opportunity for Fishing Industry in Paycheck Protection Program
- 15 May 2020, COVID-19: Trump Administration Takes Actions to Assist U.S. Fishing Industry
- 15 May 2020, COVID-19: Trump Administration Takes Actions to Assist U.S. Aquaculture

NEWS & EVENTS

- 4 June 2026, K&L Gates Receives Nearly 235 Firm, Individual Rankings in 2026 *Chambers USA* Guide
- 5 May 2026, K&L Gates Advises American Maritime Partnership on Defense of Jones Act Constitutional Challenge
- 7 February 2025, K&L Gates Secures Victory for Duwamish Tribe in Federal Recognition Lawsuit
- 28 April 2021, Blue Economy - Part 1: Offshore Wind Energy Development in the West
- 17 February 2016, K&L Gates Names 50 New Partners

AREAS OF FOCUS

- Environment and Energy
- Administrative and Regulatory Law
- Antitrust and Competition
- Commercial Disputes
- Fisheries and Aquaculture
- Public Policy and Law

INDUSTRIES

- Energy
- Maritime
- Oil and Gas
- Power
- Transportation and Logistics

REPRESENTATIVE EXPERIENCE

Constitutional and Preemption Disputes

- Lead counsel for trade associations defending the constitutionality of US shipping laws. Successfully intervened over the parties' objections and succeeded in dismissing plaintiff's claims with prejudice. *Koloa Rum Co. v. Noem*, 822 F. Supp. 3d 8 (D.D.C. 2026).
- Lead counsel for trade associations in successfully defending the constitutionality of US marine fishing laws against a coordinated, multijurisdictional attack. *Russo v. Secretary of Commerce*, 2026 WL 2602668 (11th Cir. 2026); *Arnesen v. Lutnick*, 170 F.4th 965 (5th Cir. 2026); *New England Fishermen's Stewardship Ass'n v. Lutnick*, 174 F.4th 263, 281 (1st Cir. 2026); *Lofstad v. Raimondo*, 117 F.4th 493, 499 (3d Cir. 2024).
- Lead counsel for power company in successfully dismissing state law claims with prejudice as preempted by the Federal Power Act. *Quinault Indian Nation v. Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife and TransAlta USA, Inc.* (Superior Court for Thurston County, Washington, Nov. 22, 2024).
- Represented railroad in successfully enjoining application of local ordinance as preempted by the Interstate Commerce Commission Termination Act (ICCTA). *BNSF Railway Co. v. Clark County*, 438 F.Supp.3d 1199 (W.D. Wash. 2021), aff'd, 11 F.4th 961 (9th Cir. 2021).

Antitrust and Competition Law

- Lead counsel for seafood company in defending against class action alleging a coastwide conspiracy to fix prices for seafood products. *Little et al. v. Pacific Seafood Procurement, LLC, et al.* (N.D. Cal.) (ongoing).
- Defended a Taiwanese electronics manufacturer against allegations it engaged in a global price fixing conspiracy for flat-panel screens. *In re TFT-LCD (Flat Panel) Antitrust Litigation* (N.D. Cal.).
- Defended a ski resort against antitrust claims involving its provision of housing units and resort services. *Smugglers Notch Homeowners' Ass'n, Inc. v. Smugglers' Notch Mgmt. Co., Ltd.*, 414 F. App'x 372 (2d Cir. 2011).
- Obtained dismissal with prejudice of antitrust claims asserted against a global product manufacturer and distributor. *US Ring Binder, L.P. v. World Wide Stationery Manufacturing Co., Ltd.*, 804 F. Supp. 2d 588 (N.D. Ohio 2011).

- Represented a US-based air carrier in a successful challenge to operations by a non-US helicopter services company, showing that that company was operating unlawfully in the United States.
- Successfully represented Asia-based company in securing pre-merger clearance from the Antitrust Division of the Department of Justice for US$100 million acquisition of US-based company.

Regulatory and Environmental Litigation

- Won a lawsuit against the Department of Commerce on behalf of commercial fishing industry plaintiffs who challenged a reallocation of fishing quota. *A.P. Bell Fish Co., Inc. v. Raimondo*, 94 F.4th 60 (D.C. Cir. 2024).
- Represented an electric power generator in challenging conditions of a permit issued by EPA under the Safe Drinking Water Act.
- Defended multiple clients against citizen suits under the Clean Water Act.
- Represented a major corporation against claims for contribution of Superfund response costs.
- Represented a coalition of fishing vessel operators and environmental groups in filing an amicus brief before the Fifth Circuit in support of electronic catch reporting. *Mexican Gulf Fishing Co. v. US Dep't of Commerce*, 60 F.4th 956 (5th Cir. 2023).
- Won lawsuit against the Commerce Department and overturned a reallocation of fishing quota that harmed the commercial fishing sector in the Gulf of Mexico. *Guindon v. Pritzker*, 240 F. Supp. 3d 181 (D.D.C. 2017).
- Intervened in litigation on behalf of Bering Sea crab harvesters and defeated challenge to a regulatory program expected to save the harvesters US$50 million per year in lost revenues due to unfair competition from illegally harvested crab. *Alfa Int'l Seafood, Inc. v. Ross*, 264 F. Supp. 3d 23 (D.D.C. 2017).
- Represented groundfish harvesters and processors who intervened in a legal challenge to Pacific whiting catch allocations and defeated challenge to the allocation formula. *Pacific Dawn, LLC v. Pritzker*, 831 F.3d 1166 (9th Cir. 2016).
- Won lawsuit against the Commerce Department on behalf of commercial fish harvesters, showing that the government violated numerous provisions of the Magnuson-Stevens Act by failing to hold the recreational fishing sector to its catch limits. *Guindon v. Pritzker*, 31 F. Supp. 3d 169 (D.D.C. 2014).
- Represented a coalition of fishing industry and environmental interests who intervened in a challenge to individual fishing quota (IFQ) and cooperative programs for the Pacific groundfish trawl fleet and succeeded in upholding the program. *Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen's Associations v. Locke*, 693 F.3d 1094 (9th Cir. 2012).
- Represented fishing industry and environmental interests who intervened in a challenge to an IFQ program for grouper and tilefish in the Gulf of Mexico and succeeded in upholding the program. *Coastal Conservation Association v. Blank*, 2011 WL 4530544 (M.D. Fla. Sept. 29, 2011).
- Successfully defended a fishing company against a US$4.4 million civil penalty action brought by the US Department of Commerce for allegedly exceeding crab processing restrictions.