

# William J. Murphy

Partner

William J. Murphy is held in high esteem by his clients, some of whom have described him as a “brilliant tactician” with a clear command of financial matters, while others have remarked on his “calmness that exudes confidence and works exceptionally well in the courtroom.” Another client recently told *Chambers USA* that Bill’s “ability to navigate the courtroom was well worth the price of admission.”

An experienced trial lawyer, Bill has tried civil and criminal cases to verdict in state and federal courts, represented clients in commercial arbitration, and argued numerous appeals in courts around the country.

Bill was part of the Zuckerman trial team that successfully defended Gregory Craig in a high-profile federal false statements case in 2019. After a three-week trial, the jury deliberated for only three hours before returning its not guilty verdict. Throughout a long career at the bar, Bill has represented witnesses and targets of grand jury investigations, defended clients investigated by the SEC and other federal enforcement agencies, and represented individuals in congressional investigations.

Bill was inducted as a fellow of the American College of Trial Lawyers in 2002 and currently serves as the 74th President of the College. He previously served as Chair of that organization’s Maryland State Committee and in 2018 Bill completed a four-year term on the College’s governing Board of Regents, where he represented Maryland and the District of Columbia.

Bill has been entrusted by many local, regional, and national law firms with the defense of professional malpractice and breach of fiduciary duty claims filed against those firms. He also has been qualified as an expert witness in cases involving the standard of care and the ethical obligations of lawyers and has testified in several courts on the reasonableness of attorney’s fee awards.

## Professional leadership

- President, American College of Trial Lawyers, 2023-2024
- Fellow, American College of Trial Lawyers
- Past Chair, Maryland State Committee, American College of Trial Lawyers, 2012-2014



## Baltimore

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## Practice focus

- Antitrust
- Business Litigation
- Congressional investigations
- White Collar Defense
- Employment Law and Litigation
- Investigations
- Legal Profession and Ethics
- Securities and Commodities Litigation
- False Claims Act

## Education

- University of Pennsylvania Law School, J.D., *magna cum laude*, 1978
  - Order of the Coif
  - Articles Editor, *The University of Pennsylvania Law Review*



ZUCKERMAN  
SPAEDER

- Past Regent, Board of Regents, American College of Trial Lawyers, 2014-2018
- Member, White Collar Crime Committee, American Bar Association Criminal Justice Section
- Participant in many CLE panels on issues of trial practice and professional ethics
- Past Chair, Professional Ethics and Member, Judicial Selection Committees, Baltimore City Bar Association
- Lecturer, Federal Criminal Law, Tuck School of Business, Dartmouth College, 2004-2010
- Instructor, Legal Writing, University of Baltimore School of Law, 1985-1986

- St. Joseph's University, *summa cum laude*, 1975

## Languages

## Community involvement

- Member, Board of Trustees, Supreme Court Historical Society
- Committee Member and former Honorary Co-Chair of the Annual Lawyers' Campaign for College Bound Foundation

## Recognitions

- Chambers USA: America's Leading Lawyers for Business, Litigation: General Commercial and Litigation: White-Collar Crime and Government Investigations (Maryland)
- Benchmark Litigation, Local Litigation Star (Maryland)
- The Best Lawyers in America, Appellate Practice; Bet-the-Company Litigation; Commercial Litigation; Criminal Defense: White-Collar; Ethics and Professional Responsibility Law; Legal Malpractice Law - Defendants
- Legal 500 US, White-Collar Criminal Defense
- Super Lawyers (Maryland) (named as one of the "top 10" lawyers in the state)
- The Best Lawyers in America, Lawyer of the Year, Appellate Practice; Criminal Defense: White Collar, 2023
- The Daily Record, Lifetime Achievement Award, 2021
- The Best Lawyers in America, Lawyer of the Year, Bet-the-Company Litigation, 2020
- Who's Who Legal, Global Recommended Lawyer: Business



## Crime Defense - Individuals, 2020

- National Trial Lawyers, Criminal Defense Trial Lawyer of the Year, 2019
- The Best Lawyers in America, Lawyer of the Year, Appellate, 2019
- The Best Lawyers in America, Lawyer of the Year, Legal Malpractice Law, 2017
- The Best Lawyers in America, Lawyer of the Year, Appellate, 2016
- The Best Lawyers in America, Lawyer of the Year, Bet-the-Company Litigation, 2012
- The Daily Record, Leadership in Law Award, 2012
- Daniel M. Gribbon Pro Bono Advocacy Award (awarded by the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia), 2011

### **Bar admissions**

- Maryland
- District of Columbia

### **Court admissions**

- U.S. Supreme Court
- U.S. Court of Appeals, District of Columbia Circuit
- U.S. Court of Appeals, Second Circuit
- U.S. Court of Appeals, Fourth Circuit
- U.S. Court of Appeals, Sixth Circuit
- U.S. District Court, District of Columbia
- U.S. District Court, District of Maryland

### **Clerkships**

- Hon. Harry A. Blackmun, U.S. Supreme Court
- Hon. Collins J. Seitz, United States Court of Appeals, Third Circuit

### **Representative matters**

- One of the leaders of the Zuckerman trial team that

successfully defended former White House Counsel Gregory Craig in a lengthy investigation and trial of charges based on allegations of false statements arising from a Foreign Agents Registration Act inquiry. The jury returned a not guilty verdict in September 2019.

- Long time outside counsel for the country's largest privately held retailer of alcoholic beverages. Bill successfully argued that Tennessee's discriminatory retail licensing requirements violated the Dormant Commerce Clause in a decision entered by the United States Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit. With Bill participating in the briefing, that decision was affirmed by the Supreme Court in June 2019. In a subsequent ruling Bill obtained an injunction against comparable licensing requirements imposed by the state of Indiana, and won an award of attorney's fees for the client.
- Represented a Lebanese national in federal criminal proceedings arising under the International Emergency Economic Powers Act and related federal OFAC sanctions.
- Represented a former employee of Dewey LeBoeuf, the international law firm that failed in 2012, in connection with criminal charges filed against Zuckerman's young client for participating in an alleged scheme to defraud the law firm's lenders. Following extensive pre-trial proceedings, the client entered into a deferred prosecution agreement that eventually led to all charges against him being dismissed with prejudice by the New York County District Attorney's Office.
- Over the course of his career, Bill often has been selected by prominent law firms and their insurers to handle sensitive litigation and other professional matters on behalf of those firms or individual attorneys. He recently settled a complex claim of professional malpractice for a law firm that had been alleged by a bankruptcy trustee to have contributed to the failure of the firm's former client.
- Represents a large national firm in claims alleging malpractice with respect to the firm's handling of a former client's sale of patents and related intellectual property assets.
- Settled claims against a national law firm involving allegations of professional malpractice based on an alleged failure to perfect a timely appeal from an award of attorney's fees entered as a separate judgment in employment litigation.
- Settled claims against another large national firm named



as a party in protracted litigation involving claims totaling tens of millions in alleged damages, arising from the law firm's representation of a target company in a private equity transaction.

- Represented the principal shareholders of a closely held government contractor in litigation initiated by a minority shareholder seeking dissolution of the corporation and related equitable relief. Following the successful defense of the case tried to a Maryland Circuit Court, we continued as lead counsel in post-trial and appellate proceedings, two appeals, and an eventual settlement.
- Represented several individuals detained by the U.S. military at Guantanamo Bay and at Bagram Air Force Base. In December 2009, a Yemeni physician was repatriated to his home country following eight years of incarceration at Guantanamo, as a direct result of habeas proceedings and related litigation efforts pursued by Bill and other Zuckerman Spaeder attorneys.
- Has represented the country's largest privately held retailer of wine and spirits in many regulatory and litigation matters including a successful federal antitrust challenge to Maryland wholesale price regulations in a case that involved four separate appeals to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit, a challenge to pricing regulations in Connecticut, a challenge to regulatory rulings by the liquor commission in the state of New York, and state and federal regulatory matters arising in Maryland and numerous other states where the company has expanded its business. He is currently defending the company in trademark, false advertising and related claims brought in California by a producer of high-end champagne.
- Represented several outside attorneys for Enron in U.S. Department of Justice Task Force proceedings, congressional hearings, regulatory matters, and private securities litigation that followed Enron's collapse.
- Represented several attorneys in President Clinton's Office of White House Counsel in congressional and independent counsel investigations arising from campaign finance matters, the Whitewater investigation, the Travel Office investigation, the Monica Lewinsky case, and the pardons issued by the president at the end of his second term.

