



# William W. Taylor, III

Firm Founder and Senior Counsel

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## Practice Focus

- Business Litigation
- Business Litigation - Antitrust
- Congressional Investigations
- Investigations
- Investigations - FCPA
- Legal Profession and Ethics
- Plaintiffs and Class Actions
- Securities and Commodities Litigation
- White Collar Defense

## Education

- Yale Law School, J.D., 1969
- University of North Carolina, B.A., 1966
  - Phi Beta Kappa
  - Morehead Scholarship

Described as a “lion of the white-collar Bar” in *Chambers USA*, William W. Taylor, III is a founding partner of Zuckerman Spaeder and one of the country’s foremost litigators.

Over the course of his career, he has litigated numerous high-profile civil and criminal matters, often under intense media scrutiny.

Bill practices in federal and state courts nationwide and has tried more than 60 cases to judgment. While an experienced trial lawyer, he is also well-known for his creative motions practice and is often successful in obtaining dismissal of charges against his clients before trial. He is equally at home in complex commercial litigations and straightforward credibility contests. Clients retain him not only for his litigation successes but also for his judgment and advice.

Bill’s clients have included:

- a prominent attorney Gregory Craig in a high-profile federal false statements case;
- public officials such as former International Monetary Fund (IMF) managing director Dominique Strauss-Kahn, former Rep. Tom Feeney, and the late Sen. Alan Cranston;
- executives such as former New York Stock Exchange Compensation Committee chair Kenneth Langone, former Salt Lake City Olympic Committee chair Thomas Welch and former CEO of Massey Energy Company Donald Blankenship; and
- a wide variety of public and private organizations, including Fortune 500 companies, hedge funds, law firms, and unions, among others.

He has conducted internal investigations in addition to representing clients in criminal prosecutions, regulatory enforcement matters, civil litigation, congressional investigations, and ethics inquiries. A former public defender, Bill is also committed to pro bono work and his clients include death row inmates.

Bill is a sought-after speaker at American Bar Association and National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers conferences, and he has taught at the University of North Carolina Law School, George Washington University Law School, and Catholic University Law School. He is the former chair of the ABA's Criminal Justice Section and has authored numerous publications, including a recent widely read article urging reform of the criminal discovery rules published in *The National Law Journal*.

## Experience

- 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.
- Represented 88 alumni of the University of North Carolina in an amicus brief urging a North Carolina judge to set aside a settlement between the UNC and the Sons of Confederate Veterans regarding ownership of a Confederate statue. The judge vacated the settlement and dismissed the case.
- Obtained an acquittal of all felony charges against Donald Blankenship, the former CEO of Massey Energy Company following a highly publicized and emotional trial.
- Represented former IRS official Lois Lerner in a congressional and Department of Justice (DOJ) investigation. Although the House held her in contempt, the United States Attorney declined to prosecute for Ms. Lerner's refusal to answer questions posed by the House Committee on Oversight. In October 2015, the DOJ announced that no charges would be brought against Ms. Lerner.
- Obtained dismissal of all criminal charges against Dominique Strauss-Kahn, the former managing director of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), who was accused of sexual assault in a New York City hotel. He also represented Mr. Strauss-Kahn in a related civil matter.
- Helped obtain full exoneration for the former chief of the Public Integrity Section of the Department of Justice in independent counsel and internal investigations of prosecutorial misconduct related to the prosecution of the late Sen. Ted Stevens.
- Conducted an internal investigation into possible criminal antitrust violations after FBI agents executed a search warrant at the headquarters of a public company, and grand jury subpoenas were served on the company and a number of its executives, its board of directors convened a special committee. After concluding our investigation, we reported to the committee.
- Represented former Rep. Tom Feeney in connection with a grand jury investigation into statements he made to the House Ethics Committee concerning a privately funded 2003 Scotland trip. The U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit ruled that Rep. Feeney's statements were protected under the Speech or Debate Clause—a significant decision allowing members of Congress to speak freely during ethics probes regarding legislative matters.
- Represented a former judge who had been arrested on felony drug and firearm charges. After the judge had negotiated a disposition that dropped the firearm charge, our attorneys were retained to represent him at sentencing, and we challenged the effort to apply a recidivist felony provision to obtain an enhanced penalty. The court agreed and sentenced the judge as a misdemeanor.
- Led a team of attorneys who obtained dismissal of all claims against Kenneth Langone, former Chair of the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE) Compensation Committee, relating to compensation of NYSE President Richard Grasso. The claims were brought by then New York Attorney General Elliott Spitzer.

- Represented a former congressman in investigations conducted by the U.S. House of Representatives, the U.S. Department of Justice, and state law enforcement agencies.
- Represented whistleblowers in Hurricane Katrina-related litigation in federal courts in Alabama and Mississippi involving a major casualty insurer and a claims adjustment company for whom the whistleblowers worked. The disputes between the whistleblowers and the company ultimately settled.
- Represented a major national law firm in a federal grand jury investigation and the subsequent indictment. The charges were resolved by a deferred prosecution agreement that allowed the firm to continue in business without substantial harm to its innocent partners and employees.
- Represented a former public official in Delaware who was indicted for racketeering and multiple counts of mail and wire fraud by political adversaries after she initiated significant reforms. The representation included a trial resulting in a hung jury, two appeals, and a government petition for writ of mandamus and reassignment to a different judge. After we won a motion to preclude much of the prosecution's case, the government offered a disposition in which our client agreed to plead guilty, with no jail time, to one of the lesser charges in exchange for the dismissal of all other charges.
- Conducted an internal investigation on behalf of an international pharmaceutical company concerning failure to disclose a preliminary report of a safety study to the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) before an important advisory committee meeting. After reviewing thousands of documents and conducting dozens of interviews in the United States and Europe, we issued a report concluding that human error, not an intent to conceal, underlay the failure to inform the FDA about the ongoing study and the preliminary report.
- Defended Thomas Welch, the former president of the Salt Lake City Olympic Committee against federal fraud and bribery charges arising out of the competition for the 2002 Winter Games. Following a five-week trial, our client was acquitted of federal racketeering and fraud charges.
- Defended the late California Sen. Alan Cranston, one of the "Keating Five," in public hearings before the Senate Ethics Committee arising out of the failure of the Lincoln Savings and Loan Association.

## Bar Admissions

- District of Columbia
- North Carolina

## Court admissions

- U.S. Court of Appeals, District of Columbia Circuit
- U.S. Court of Appeals, Eleventh Circuit
- U.S. Court of Appeals, Fifth Circuit
- U.S. Court of Appeals, Fourth Circuit
- U.S. Court of Appeals, Second Circuit
- U.S. District Court, District of Columbia
- U.S. District Court, District of Maryland
- U.S. District Court, Northern District of New York
- U.S. Supreme Court

## Clerkships

- U.S. District Court, District of Delaware
  - Hon. Caleb M. Wright

## Government Service

- Public Defender Service for the District of Columbia
  - Public Defender

## Professional Leadership

- Fellow, American College of Trial Lawyers
- Board of Directors, Washington Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights and Urban Affairs
- Board of Trustees, Greater Washington Community Foundation
- Former Visiting Professor, University of North Carolina Law School
- Former Adjunct Faculty Member, Catholic University Law School
- Former Chair, Board of Directors, Fair Trial Initiative
- Former Member, Advisory Committee on the Rules of Evidence of the U.S. Judicial Conference
- Former Chair, District of Columbia Commission on Judicial Disabilities and Tenure
- Former Member, Board of Directors, Center for Death Penalty Litigation
- Former Chair, Board of Trustees, Public Defender Service for the District of Columbia
- Former Chair, Criminal Justice Section, American Bar Association
- Board of Directors, DC Law Students in Court