



→ Kirsten Ortega Ryan

Associate

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Kirsten Ortega Ryan is an associate in the Business Trial Practice Group in the firm's Washington, D.C. office.

Areas of Practice

Kirsten represents clients in complex business litigation and regulatory compliance matters, with an emphasis in the communications sector. She represents clients before federal and state trial and appellate courts across the country as well as federal and state administrative agencies involving commercial disputes and controversies involving communications, environmental, and administrative law issues.

Kirsten regularly represents cable operators and other broadband providers in a variety of regulatory, litigation, and transactional matters related to municipal franchising, franchise fees, rights-of-way, pole attachments, infrastructure deployment and related issues. She represents providers on these issues in state and federal courts and participates in rulemakings and adjudications before the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and state public service commissions.

As a member of Sheppard Mullin's Communications Industry Team, which was named "Telecommunications Practice Group of the Year" for 2019, Kirsten also counsels satellite companies in matters before the Federal Communications Commission, including rulemaking, licensing, and enforcement matters. She also counsels international communications providers regarding regulatory compliance for activities in the United States.

Kirsten also has a robust pro bono practice, representing numerous clients seeking asylum in the U.S., and environmental organizations in federal court actions arising under the Clean Water Act.

Kirsten previously worked as a student attorney in GW Law's Immigration Clinic, representing clients before US Citizenship and Immigration Services and the Arlington Immigration Court. She also attended Joint Programme in International Human Rights Law at the University of Oxford, and served as a research assistant for Karima Bennoune, the United Nations' Special Rapporteur in the Field of Cultural Rights.

Honors

National Association of Women Lawyers Outstanding Law Student, GW Graduating Class of 2019

George Washington University Law School Pro Bono Service Award, 2019

Experience

Representative Matters

- Represents national cable operator in litigation in federal and state court regarding franchise fees, access to rights-of-way, and pole attachments.
- Represents national cable operator in rate negotiations with utilities in various states, including Maine and Hawaii.
- Represents a broad coalition of cable providers in pole attachment rulemaking proceedings before state public utilities commissions, including in Maine, Connecticut, and Georgia.
- Obtained a landmark appellate victory for not-for-profit organization at Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals for not-for-profit organization on issue of first impression under the Clean Water Act and Administrative Procedure Act. *Trout Unlimited v. Pirzadeh*, 1 F.4th 738 (9th Cir. 2021).

Articles

- "Urban Killing Fields: International Humanitarian Law, Gang Violence, and Armed Conflict on the Streets of El Salvador" 20 *International and Comparative Law Review* 97 (2020)

FCC Law Blog Posts

- "The FCC's Latest Pole Attachment Ruling: "Just Another Brick In The Wall" for Electric Utilities, or "Satisfaction" for ILECS?," September 30, 2021
- "UPDATE: National Security Meets Teenage Dance Battles: U.S. Increases Pressure on ByteDance Sale of TikTok," August 17, 2020
- "National Security Meets Teenage Dance Battles: Trump Issues Executive Orders Impacting TikTok and WeChat Business in the U.S." August 7, 2020

Media Mentions

EPA Reversal on Pebble Mine Pollution Limits is Reviewable
Bloomberg Law: Environment & Energy, 06.17.2021

9th Circuit revives lawsuit over Alaska's Pebble Mine project
Reuters, 06.17.2021

9th Circ. Says EPA's Move On Alaska Mine Can Be Challenged
Law360, 06.17.2021

Practices

Class Action Defense

Litigation

Industries

Telecom

Education

J.D., The George Washington University Law School, 2019, *with honors*, Guide to International Legal Research Editor, *George Washington International Law Review*

B.A., The George Washington University, Elliott School of International Affairs, 2011, *summa cum laude*, *Phi Beta Kappa*

Admissions

District of Columbia

U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit