SpencerFane®

Christopher F. (Chris) Weiss

Of Counsel

Contact
Springfield
P 417.888.1036 | **F** 417.881.8035
cweiss@spencerfane.com



Overview

Chris Weiss serves as a trusted advisor and accomplished trial attorney with more than 22 years of experience helping clients across a wide spectrum of industries resolve their most complex problems and critical cases.

Developing a deep understanding of his clients, their businesses and their goals, Chris creates cost-effective, innovative, and proactive strategies to protect his clients' interests before litigation arises. He enjoys helping clients predict and proactively solve their most complex problems, as well as manage and budget for their risks. But when litigation arises, Chris is a formidable advocate with a proven record of success, whether in state or federal court or before a governmental body or administrative agency.

Chris has been recognized by *Best Lawyers in America* for Litigation – Land Use and Zoning. Chris represents clients in all types of complex civil and commercial litigation. He has deep knowledge in the fields of real estate, development, and construction, and land use and zoning, condominium, and association law, as well as creditor rights and bankruptcy, employment law, consumer protection law, fiduciary and trusts and estate law, and non-profit law. He has a wealth of experience representing resort developers, timeshare companies, property owners' associations, developers, and contractors in matters that affect their business and projects.

Chris also represents creditors in bankruptcies, adversary proceedings, and collection matters, and has significant experience in the farm credit space. He also handles fiduciary and trust and estate litigation, and represents businesses and employers in discrimination and employment law cases. Chris has successfully defended clients against class-actions and consumer cases involving TCPA claims, state and federal consumer protection law claims, and ADA accessibility claims. Chris also has a passion and commitment to pro bono work. He has handled several pro bono cases involving application of the Hague Convention in cases involving international parental child abductions, in which he obtained the safe return of minor children who were wrongfully taken from their home country and their left-behind parents.

Education

- Saint Louis University School of Law (J.D.)
- University of Notre Dame (B.A.)

Bar Admissions

- Missouri

Court Admissions

- U.S. District Court for the Western District of Missouri

Community Involvement

- Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Ozarks, Board of Directors, 2014-2020; Secretary, 2016; President-Elect, 2018; President, 2019
- Cinnamon Square Property Owners Association, President and Board Member
- Downtown Springfield Association, Board of Directors, 2014-present; President, 2015-2016
- Leadership Springfield, Class 29
- Notre Dame Club of St. Louis, Board of Directors, 2003-2006
- Southwest Missouri Rush Soccer Club, Coach
- Springfield Art Museum, Board of Directors, 2014-2020; Secretary, 2016; Chairman of the Board, 2017-2020
- Springfield Art Museum Foundation, Inc, Founding Board Member
- Springfield Catholic Softball Association, Board member and coach
- Think Big Foundation, Inc., Founding Board President and board member
- Urban Districts Alliance, Board of Directors, 2012-2015; President, 2014-2015; President Elect, 2013-2014; Secretary, 2012-2013

Distinctions

- *Best Lawyers in America*, Commercial Litigation, Litigation – Land Use and Zoning, 2021-2022, 2026-2027
- Missouri Bar, Pro Bono Publico Award, 2020
- Missouri Bar Pro Bono Wall of Fame, 2012-2014, 2017-2019

Memberships

- The Missouri Bar
- Springfield Metropolitan Bar Association

Related Experience

- Compelled arbitration and enforced class-action waivers in a putative nationwide class-action case.
- Compelled arbitration and enforced plaintiffs' contractual class waivers for timeshare client when consumers sought class action alleging fraud and violation of Missouri Merchandising Practices Act (MMPA).

- Successfully defended putative $11 million class action against retail client under Missouri Merchandising Practices Act (MMPA), with removal to federal court and Class Action Fairness Act (CAFA). Case was voluntarily dismissed by the plaintiff with no payment by the client.
- Successfully pursued debtor and bank on behalf of lender through multiple bankruptcy cases and adversary proceedings involving a complex multiple party fraud scheme spanning several years, resulting in a substantial settlement in favor of the client and the bankruptcy estate.
- Won summary judgment against a multi-million dollar claim asserted by resort management company against resort developer client.
- Successfully defended bank who served as trustee of an irrevocable trust against claims for breach of fiduciary duty asserted by the personal representative of the estate of the grantor and certain beneficiaries of the trust.
- Defended regional hospital system in employment and age discrimination and retaliation case.
- Represented a Honduran man in a pro bono international parental kidnapping case, in which the client returned home from work to find that his wife had taken their 22-month-old daughter and illegally smuggled herself and the child into the U.S. Utilizing provisions of the Hague Convention and International Child Abduction Remedies Act, won a federal court case ordering the child be returned to the client's custody in Honduras, and then successfully reunited the father and child with the help of the Honduran government, despite challenges resulting from U.S. Immigration policies that prevented the father from traveling to the U.S. to take custody of the child.
- In collaboration with the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children and under terms of the Hague Convention and International Child Abduction Remedies Act, reunited a Honduras-based father with his missing sons and daughter after his ex-wife smuggled herself and their children through Mexico to illegally live in the United States.
- In a pro bono matter, reunited a 12-year-old girl with her mother in Germany by applying the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction and the International Child Abduction Remedies Act to win a federal court order requiring the child, who was wrongfully retained in the United States by her father, to be returned to her mother in their home country.

Clerk Experience

- The Hon. Paul J. Simon, Missouri Court of Appeals