



Lauren Varnado

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Energy

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Profile

Lauren Varnado is the Managing Partner of M&R's Houston office and member of the firm's Commercial Litigation Practice Group. Lauren is an experienced trial lawyer, representing oil, gas and petrochemical clients in high-stakes, "bet the company" lawsuits in state and federal courts, including contract cases, fraud and tort actions, lawsuits alleging environmental contamination, international and domestic arbitrations between energy producers, class action royalty litigation, and market manipulation disputes related to trading in energy and commodity markets.

Beyond the courtroom, Lauren routinely advises private and public E&P companies about rights and obligations under upstream, midstream, power and LNG contracts; litigation avoidance and risk mitigation; climate change litigation; and investments and contractual rights and obligations in renewable energy (solar and wind). Clients also frequently seek guidance from Lauren on matters

concerning the acquisition and divestiture of oil & gas properties and midstream assets; oil & gas production and business operations; oil & gas leases; accounting obligations to interest owners; and royalty payment practices.

Lauren has litigated and/or advised clients in oil & gas operations in Texas, Ohio, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, California, North Dakota, New Mexico, Kentucky, Louisiana, Colorado, and Oklahoma.

Associated Industries

Energy

Associated Practices

Commercial & Business Litigation

Representative Matters

Defending the largest natural gas producer in the U.S. in putative class action in federal court alleging failure to properly calculate and pay royalties on natural gas liquids., Defending midstream company against claims of breach of contract and tortious interference claims relating to obligations under a pipeline easement agreement., Representing a defendant operator in connection with claims for royalty underpayments, breach of contract, trespass, fraud and alleged statutory violations relating to the timeliness of royalty payments., Representing a midstream company in confidential arbitration of claims arising out of Winter Storm Uri., Defending independent gas producer in Pennsylvania state court against claims alleging breach of contract. Tort claims dismissed., Sampling of matters prior to joining M&R., Successfully tried to jury verdict a case on behalf of an international oil & gas exploration and production company involving disputed payments for oil production under production sharing contracts in the Deir Ez Zor Area in Syria., Secondment to Shell Oil Company, Upstream Americas; drafted agreements for transactions with various third parties to manage associated risks and realize commercial objectives; provided legal advice and support to the domestic unconventional business, covering all aspects of exploration, appraisal, development, production and operation of Shell's onshore tight sand/shale oil & gas assets., Defended a national fuel tank manufacturer against contribution and indemnity claims arising from the alleged defective construction of a gas station. Case dismissed in district court., Represented an oilfield services company in connection with claims of breach of non-compete and confidentiality obligations by a former officer and owner of the company, resulting in an arbitration award in favor of the client following a seven-day evidentiary hearing., and Represented a defendant operator in connection with purported class action involving claims for royalty underpayments, breach of contract, breach of fiduciary duty, conversion, unjust enrichment and breach of duty to market gas as a reasonably prudent operator. Case dismissed on summary judgment in the district court.

Bar & Court Admissions

- State Bar of Texas
- U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth and Ninth Circuits
- U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Texas

- U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California
- U.S. District Court for the Northern and Southern Districts of West Virginia

Professional Affiliations

- Women's Energy Network, member
- Energy Mineral Law Foundation, member
- Institute for Energy Law, member

Education

- South Texas College of Law, J.D.
- Texas A&M University, B.A.

Award & Special Recognition

- Rising Star, *Super Lawyers Magazine* (2018-2022)

Newsroom

Publications - 10/24/2022 4:34pm

Lauren Varnado's article "Trial By (Gun) Fire," published in Houstonia

Headlines - 09/14/2022 12:21pm

Lauren Varnado Featured by Super Lawyers Magazine