

David W. Blass, Leading Regulatory Lawyer in Funds Industry, to Join Simpson Thacher



David W. Blass

New York/Washington, D.C. — May 22, 2017 — Simpson Thacher & Bartlett LLP announced today that David W. Blass, the current General Counsel of the Investment Company Institute, will join the Firm’s Investment Funds Practice in June as a Partner in the Washington, D.C. office.

In his current role, David has served as the chief legal officer for the ICI, the trade association for the registered fund industry. At ICI, he has been responsible for the full range of legal and regulatory matters affecting the asset management industry, including investment company, capital markets, pension and tax issues.

Before joining ICI, David held a number of senior positions at the Securities and Exchange Commission. From 2011 to 2014, David was Chief Counsel and Associate Director of the SEC’s Division of Trading and Markets. In that role, David led a team of 45 attorneys responsible for legal and policy decisions on matters affecting the securities markets and broker-dealers generally, and the private equity industry specifically. Before that, he was the Associate General Counsel in charge of advising the SEC Chair and Commissioners on legal policy matters for the agency’s asset management, trading and markets, examination and international programs. Previously, as Assistant Director in the SEC’s Division of Investment Management, he managed the office in charge of investment adviser regulation, which included private fund advisers.

“In the last several years, our clients have increasingly needed high-level regulatory advice and support on issues involving innovative registered funds products, Investment Advisers Act compliance, SEC examination and enforcement matters, and broker-dealer regulatory compliance,” said Bill Dougherty, Chairman of Simpson Thacher’s Executive Committee. “David is ideally suited to help our clients address these critical issues.”

“David’s addition will augment the Firm’s ability to service the full range of registered fund formation and regulatory needs of our fund clients,” added Michael Wolitzer, Head of the Firm’s Investment Funds Practice. “He will be a tremendous asset to registered funds, registered investment advisers and broker-dealers, in particular.”

“I am thrilled to join Simpson Thacher,” said David Blass. “Throughout my career, I have admired the Firm and its deep bench of truly outstanding lawyers, who form a fully integrated team to serve each client’s needs. Working to protect and advance the interests of the fund industry as ICI’s General Counsel has been the honor of my life, and I am excited now to offer my experience and knowledge to the service of the Firm’s clients.”

David has also spent time in private practice. From 2008 to 2010, he served as a Special Counsel in the asset management group at Willkie Farr & Gallagher. Earlier in his career, he worked at Davis Polk & Wardwell in New York, Frankfurt and London. David received his J.D. in 1998 from Columbia University School of Law, and his B.A. from the University of Alabama.

Simpson Thacher’s Investment Funds Practice is global, multidisciplinary and closely integrated with the rest of the Firm. From fund formation to ongoing advice for both registered and unregistered funds and advisers to counseling in connection with M&A and financing transactions with respect to both the funds and their managers, the Firm provides superior advice in both the public and private fund arenas. The Firm has represented many of the best-known investment advisory firms, asset managers and other financial institutions that sponsor a range of funds, from diversified, publicly listed managers to privately owned single strategy firms.