

Government Relations and Administrative Law

About RWL

With offices located in the state capital of Annapolis, Baltimore, and the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area, RWL provides an important link to principal business, commercial and governmental centers.

Since its founding in 1989, RWL and its many attorneys have created an impressive record of service to the state and in the practice of law. As one of Maryland's first law firms to recognize that a client's legal issues can often be addressed through a comprehensive approach that may include all of the various branches of government, RWL has established itself in the areas of business and commercial transactions, administrative law, health care law, government relations, sports franchise law, procurement law, zoning and land use, and complex litigation.

Where law, government and business converge, and where public policy and public opinion intersect, RWL is there to assist – using our “team approach” to navigate through the maze of Maryland laws, regulations and governmental institutions.

RWL provides our clients with sound legal and practical business advice in courtrooms, boardrooms and hearing rooms. Our attorneys regularly appear before arbitration and mediation panels, state and federal courts and appellate courts, legislative hearings, Board of Public Works, and Maryland State Board of Contract Appeals.

RWL's State Contracting, Procurement and Bid Protests practice combines over four decades of collective procurement law experience with creative litigation energy to bring decisive and positive results for its government contracting clients. Understanding that this practice may be the one area of the law where disputants are generally “suing” to do business with their opponent, RWL's vast relationships with Maryland state agencies serves bolster the its clients' interests.

RWL and its attorneys have annually been included in a number prestigious law firm rating systems that rank outstanding lawyers and law firms who have achieved a high degree of peer recognition and professional achievement, including top rankings in Chambers, Best Lawyers, Super Lawyers and Martindale-Hubbell.

ADMINISTRATIVE LAW AND REGULATORY COMPLIANCE

BUSINESS AND COMMERCIAL TRANSACTIONS

CANNABIS POLICY, ADMINISTRATIVE LAW AND LITIGATION

COMPLEX COMMERCIAL AND CIVIL LITIGATION

ELECTRONICALLY STORED INFORMATION (ESI)

GOVERNMENT RELATIONS AND LOBBYING

MEDIATION AND DISPUTE RESOLUTION

NATIONAL PRACTICE DEVELOPMENT

SPORTS LAW, GAMING AND FACILITIES

STATE CONTRACTING, PROCUREMENT AND BID PROTESTS

WHITE COLLAR CRIMINAL DEFENSE AND INVESTIGATIONS

Our Clients

Access Holdings Management
Altumint, Inc. (Optotraffic)
America Works of Maryland, Inc.
Ashley Addiction Treatment
Babe Ruth Birthplace and Museum
Baltimore Animal Rescue & Care Center (BARCS)
Baltimore Symphony Orchestra (BSO)
Berkshire Hathaway Energy GT&S, LLC (Cove Point)
Bernstein Litowitz Berger & Grossmann LLP
Brewers Association of Maryland
Brown Advisory
BSC America
Cable Telecommunications Association of MD, DE & DC
Cal Ripken, Sr. Foundation
Canton Group, The
Catalis/Intuition
CBAC Gaming (Caesars Horseshoe Casino Baltimore)
Celebree School
CGI Technologies and Solutions Inc.
Chesapeake Shakespeare Company
Children's National Health System
Colonial Pipeline Company
Corebridge Financial Group
Coppin State University Development Foundation
Curio Wellness
DentaQuest
Education Affiliates/Fortis College
Enterprise/Alamo/National Rental Cars
Envirotest Systems
Fair Hill Condominium Association
Fair Hill Foundation, Inc.
FedEx Corporation
Fidelity Information Services, LLC
Food & Friends, Inc.
Friends of Patapsco Valley State Park
Gaudenzia, Inc.
Google LLC and its Affiliates.
GT Independence
H&R Block Management, LLC
Horizon Land Company
Humanim, Inc.
JMI Equity
Land Preservation Trust (Shawan Downs)
Leda Health Corporation
Light & Wonder
LRP Guardian House LLC
Maryland Association of Pediatric Dentists
Maryland Association of Realtors
Maryland Automobile Dealers Association
Maryland Care, Inc. (Maryland Physicians Care MCO)
Maryland Distillers Guild
Maryland Jockey Club (Pimlico, Laurel Park, Rosecroft)
Maryland Partnership for Prevention, Inc.
Maryland Tech Council
Maryland Wineries Association
Maximus
Medallia, Inc.
Meta Platforms, Inc. (Facebook)
Modern Living Solutions
Mount Vernon Place Conservancy
MTX Group, Inc.
NaphCare, Inc.
Nareit
Pepeco Holdings, Inc.
PGA of America
Pharmaceutical Care Management Association (PCMA)
Preakness Stakes®
Premium Cigar Retailers Association of Maryland
Prologis, Inc.
Real Time Medical Systems
Reed Group
Right at School, LLC
Ripken Baseball
Roland Park Community Foundation
SCI Management
Scientific Games, LLC
Sheppard Pratt Health System
Skyline Technology Solutions
Spotless Brands
Story of Maryland, LLC
Terra Firma Retreat Center
The Maryland Zoo in Baltimore
ThinkBig Networks LLC
Tufton Professional Baseball, LLC
TVI, Inc. (Savers)
UPMC Western Maryland
URW Airports, LLC
Verity Construction Company
Washington Area New Automobile Dealers Association
Waste Management of Maryland
Wild Kid Acres, LLC
Xcaliber International LTD, LLC

**Based on public filings. GR clients only.*

RWL Government Relations (GR) and Administrative Law

Established in 1989, RWL has represented numerous local, national, and international businesses and non-profits before Maryland's state, county and local/municipal governments. On behalf of our clients, members of our government relations team regularly appear before the Governor's Office, executive branch agencies, the Maryland General Assembly, and various city and county governments.

GOVERNMENT RELATIONS PRACTICE

RWL's Government Relations Practice integrates experienced legal analysis with a sophisticated understanding of administrative, legislative and procurement processes, providing clients with meaningful opportunities for success. We are recognized for our substantive approach, ability to develop creative solutions, and deep expertise with Maryland state, county, and local governments. RWL is well positioned to assist clients with government relations and lobbying efforts in Annapolis and throughout Maryland.

RWL pioneered the team approach to working with clients in Annapolis. Depending on client needs, additional team members will be brought on whenever the client will benefit from the team members' expertise, experience and relationships.

AREAS OF EXPERTISE

- New and Emerging Industries
- Business Development
- Technology and E-Commerce
- Communications
- Public-Private Partnerships
- Health Care and Human Services
- Natural Resources
- Board of Public Works
- Higher Education
- Energy Industry
- Real Estate
- Tax Policy
- Procurement
- Alcohol
- Cannabis
- Government Contracts
- Transportation
- Gaming
- Election Law

RWL GR Engagement Services



ADVOCACY AND EDUCATION SERVICES

RWL works with clients to help them develop, coordinate and deliver their message to the Executive Branch, Legislature and relevant local governments. Our advocacy work includes assisting with grassroots organizing, direct lobbying, monitoring legislative activities, advising clients on the status of pending and anticipated measures, and analyzing the impact of legislative proposals on client interests. We also support our clients in their efforts to influence and win large procurements at the state and local level.



PROCUREMENT ADVISORY SERVICES

RWL has a proven track record of working on some of the largest procurements in the State of Maryland. We support clients in helping them establish relationships with the Governor's Office and key agencies. RWL also supports clients in establishing partnerships with potential MBE partners. The Firm also supports clients who have successfully been awarded state procurements through the final approval by the three-member Board of Public Works, chaired by Governor Moore. RWL also helps companies that have already won large procurements but need help establishing relationships with members of leadership in Governor Moore's Administration.



LEGISLATIVE AND REGULATORY MONITORING SERVICES

RWL provides extensive regulatory and legislative monitoring and tracking services for our clients during the Maryland General Assembly's Legislative Session (which commences annually in early January and runs through the early part of April), during the interim between sessions, and during any Special Sessions. This includes published legislative proposals, regulations, Executive Orders, agency bulletins and transmittals as well as numerous workgroups, budget hearings, committee meetings, Board of Public Works meetings, and government officials' press conferences and other events.



LEGISLATIVE DELEGATION AND COMMITTEE EVENTS

In addition to participating in national, regional, and statewide legislative conferences throughout the year, RWL has a long tradition of hosting legislators and other public officials at Committee and Delegation events during the Legislative Session in Annapolis, starting with an Opening Day Reception. These events provide a relaxed and professional atmosphere in which our clients have an opportunity to interact with officials and members of the Maryland General Assembly and each other. Annually, RWL hosts approximately 12 events. We encourage our clients to take advantage of these opportunities to gain insights and educate legislators.

RWL GR Accomplishments

RECENT LEGISLATIVE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Since its inception, RWL has built an impressive track record working on complicated and nuanced client issues. As a result, the firm is consistently ranked as a one of the top firms in Annapolis.

- **Preakness Stakes** – The RWL government relations and litigation teams spearheaded a yearlong legislative and legal effort to keep the Second Jewel of the Triple Crown in Baltimore City, redevelop Pimlico and Laurel racetracks, and help advance the long-standing interests of the Park Heights Community. (See, Baltimore Sun article.)
- **Offshore Wind Energy** – RWL successfully advocated for legislation for our client to qualify for benefits of the federal Inflation Reduction Act – including funding which is essential to the development and continued growth of their Maryland offshore wind projects.
- **Modernization of State Alcohol Laws** – On behalf of Maryland’s craft beer manufacturers, RWL launched a multi-year effort culminating in the modernization of the State’s alcoholic beverage laws, including statutory reform of Maryland’s beer franchise laws for the first time since 1974 and created a new hybrid category of alcohol regulation for mead, a honey-based alcoholic drink.
- **Maryland State Spirit** – RWL advanced legislation that designated Maryland Rye Whiskey as the Maryland State Spirit. While symbolic, this legislation will help put Maryland on the map for its Rye Whiskey production, as well as rye agricultural production – thus supporting Maryland manufacturing and agriculture sectors.
- **Budget Appropriations** – During the 2023 session budget process, RWL assisted several clients (including non-profit pro bono clients) to collectively receive more than 25 itemized appropriations in the State’s operating and capital budgets to support capital projects, operating support, one-time uses, and more.
- **Real Estate Ownership** – On behalf of a corporate real estate owner of manufactured housing communities, RWL worked with non-profit advocates, legislators, and other stakeholders to successfully craft nuanced legislation that protects the interests of both tenants and landowners while dissuading bad actors from entering the Maryland real estate market.
- **Healthcare** – Pharmaceutical Drug Prices – During the shortened 2020 legislative session, RWL successfully led a legislative effort with a national association to enact a first-in-the-nation regulatory framework of a critical part of the pharmaceutical drug supply and payment chain. The legislation passed in Maryland now serves as model legislation throughout the Country.

Meet the Team



OBIE L. CHINEMERE

Senior Government Relations Adviser
and Co-Chair of Government
Relations Division

- Co-Chair of the Government Relations Division.
- Received his bachelor's degree in Political Science from the University of Maryland, Baltimore County.
- Currently working on his Masters of Public Administration at Villanova University.
- Regional Director, Office of U.S. Senator Chris Van Hollen (2018-2020).
- Deputy Field Director, Ben Jealous for Governor (2018).
- Campaign Manager, Cory McCray for Senate (2017-2018).
- Community Liaison, Baltimore City Councilman Eric Costello (2015-2017).



MATTHEW M. BOHLE

Senior Government Relations Adviser
and Co-Chair of Government
Relations Division

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- Co-Chair of the Government Relations Division.
 - Served as Regional Director for the Maryland House Democratic Caucus, in this capacity successfully oversaw and advised numerous House campaigns.
 - Former Special Assistant to the Senate Majority Leader.
 - Campaign Director for the Maryland Democratic Majority Slate.
 - Managed several legislative races during the 2010 cycle that led to gains for the majority caucus against the backdrop of a national wave election year.
 - Lobbied successfully on technology, telecommunications, tobacco, alcohol, business and nonprofit matters.
 - Part of successful effort to resist new higher taxes on small businesses, specifically Maryland's Premium Cigar stores.
 - Successfully assisted Greenland Technologies Corporation in instituting a first in the nation grant fund for the purchase of zero-emission heavy equipment property (forklifts, loaders, diggers and the like).
 - Lead advocate for the Maryland Wineries Association in their successful effort to institute a capital development grant program for wineries and vineyards.

Meet the Team



MICHAEL V. JOHANSEN ESQ.
Administrative Partner

- Former staff counsel to Maryland Senate Budget and Taxation Committee handling matters related to state and local taxes, retirement, and agency budgets.
- Experienced lobbyist on health care delivery systems, health insurance, and health occupations, including managed care, hospitals, skilled nursing facilities, dental plans and pharmaceuticals.
- Team leader on multi-firm effort to preserve the Preakness Stakes in Maryland and to enact a statutory framework for a nearly \$400 million capital redevelopment effort for Maryland's racetracks.
- Counsel for automotive industries including new automobile dealers and rental car agencies.
- Lead lobbyist on legislation to authorize transportation network companies.
- Experienced gaming lobbyist representing lottery, casino, racetrack and sports wagering interests.
- Procurement counsel assisting entities on RFPs, bids and other offers of goods, services and construction to state and local governments.
- Counsel clients on state and local ethics laws, gift laws, campaign contribution compliance, election laws, and lobbying rules.



JOEL D. ROZNER, ESQ.
Partner and Former Chair of
Government Relations Division

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- Chair of Government Relations Division 2003-2018.
 - 2019 Recipient of Maryland Government Relations Association's Outstanding Colleague Award.
 - Former Chief of Staff for Prince George's County Executive Parris Glendening.
 - Appointed by Anne Arundel County Executives Steve Schuh and Steuart Pittman to serve on the Anne Arundel County Economic Development Corporation Board of Directors.
 - Lead lobbyist in gaining approval for Orsted's offshore wind project.
 - Lead lobbyist in gaining necessary approvals for Dominion's LNG export facility in Calvert County.
 - Represented as co-lead lobbyist for Washington Redskins in their successful move to Prince George's County.
 - Co-lead lobbyist on successful effort for first Maryland P3 project, (Baltimore Seagirt Marine Terminal facility).
 - Campaign manager for various federal, state and local elections.

Meet the Team



CAMILLE G. FESCHE, ESQ.

Partner and Co-Chair of National Practice Development Group



BRAD I. RIFKIN, ESQ.

Partner, Co-Chair of National Practice Development Group, and Co-Chair of Cannabis Policy, Administrative Law and Litigation Group

- Worked on Michael Bloomberg's first campaign for mayor of New York City. Analyst for team that created New York City's innovative 3-1-1 non-emergency phone number transforming New Yorkers' ability to communicate with their government and delivery of City services.
 - Lead lobbyist on successful passage of first-in-the-nation regulatory framework of critical part of the pharmaceutical drug supply and payment chain. Passage of the regulatory framework involving significant negotiations with legislators, regulators and opponents.
 - Passed legislation is now serving as model legislation for other states.
 - Lead lobbyist on creating new hybrid category of alcohol regulation for mead, a honey based alcoholic drink and oldest known form of consumable alcohol.
 - Lead lobbyist on successful legislation modernizing trust law ensuring patients can access the full benefits of a Health Savings Account. The change in law allowed a company employing 150+ knowledge workers to remain headquartered in Maryland.
 - Successfully represent clients on topics related to education, wind energy, utilities, healthcare, deathcare, information technology, the civil justice system, bond bills for non-profit organizations, and procurement matters.
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- Represents clients with a wide array of statutory, regulatory, funding and procurement interests in industries ranging from alcohol manufacturing, automobile dealer, cannabis, casino-gaming, credit service businesses, energy, franchise laws, healthcare, innovative technology, insurance, investment services and platforms, non-profit organizations, rental cars, ride-sharing, ride-hailing, sports franchises and facilities.
 - Lead lobbyist on successful passage of complex and high-profile medical cannabis legislation, expanding ownership rights and advancing in-state research capabilities for licensees in partnership with academic institutions.
 - Lead lobbyist securing the successful passage of legislation modernizing alcoholic beverage laws on behalf of Maryland's craft beer manufacturers – including the statutory reform of Maryland's beer franchise laws for the first time since 1974.
 - Co-lead lobbyist on the successful passage of transformative legislation creating the first statutory and regulatory framework for peer-to-peer ridesharing in the nation.
 - Lead lobbyist on successful passage of legislation creating a statutory framework for Maryland's private sector industrial hemp industry.
 - Worked on successful passage of legislation that will keep the Preakness Stakes in Baltimore City, redeveloped Pimlico and Laurel racetracks, and helped advance the long-standing interests of the Park Heights community.
 - Worked on the successful passage of legislation to enable sports wagering in Maryland.

Meet the Team



JOHN C. REITH (JR)
Chief Operating Officer



WILLIAM A. CASTELLI, ESQ.
Partner

- Former Co-Chair of Government Relations.
- Responsible for Marketing and Business Development for RWL, LLC.
- Co-Chairman & Campaign Advisor for former Maryland Governor Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr.
- Member of Maryland Governor Larry Hogan's 2015 Inaugural Committee.
- Co-Chair of Inaugural Committee for former Baltimore Mayor.
- RWL's lead lobbyist representing clients before the Governor's Office and State's agencies.
- Lobbyist on team representing Scientific Games in successful bid for Maryland Lottery contract.
- Lobbyist on multi-firm team effort (led by RWL) to preserve the Preakness Stakes in Maryland and to enact a statutory framework for a nearly \$400 million capital redevelopment effort for Maryland's racetracks.
- Represented various industries in Maryland, including schools, bank transaction companies, gaming, information technology, hospital systems, health care companies, energy, real estate, alcohol manufacturing, engineering, infrastructure, transportation, bond bills for non-profit organizations and procurement.

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- Previous Senior Vice President of Government Affairs for the Maryland REALTORS®, one of the largest professional trade associations in Maryland.
 - Successfully lobbied bills and regulations impacting real property, professional licensing, land-use, environmental law, landlord-tenant law, state taxes, and common ownership communities.
 - Lead lobbyist on legislation reforming Maryland's property tax law which triggered the return of hundreds of millions of dollars back to Maryland residential mortgage holders.
 - Lead lobbyist in establishing tax free Homebuyer Savings Accounts.
 - Lead lobbyist for permanently extending Mortgage debt tax forgiveness for property owners facing foreclosure.
 - Lead lobbyist in making the Real Estate Commission a special fund supported Commission.
 - Lead lobbyist in passing a comprehensive reform of the Real Estate Brokerage Act.
 - Lead lobbyist in establishing a notice process in the land records for older easements on property. Key lobbyist in passing legislation permitting remote notarization in Maryland.
 - Lead lobbyist in passing legislation requiring a Maryland Department of Environment grant for septic upgrades imposed on Maryland homeowners.
 - Past president of the Maryland Government Relations Association.

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