

Drew York

Partner

Drew York focuses his practice on representing plaintiffs and defendants in class action/mass tort litigation and complex commercial disputes before federal and state courts all over Texas and in many other jurisdictions across the country. He has obtained successful trial verdicts, dismissals and settlements in disputes involving a wide variety of challenging issues, ranging from genetically-modified crops and securities fraud to consumer finance and residential construction liability.

Drew played a major role in two significant cases to the agriculture industry. He currently represents thousands of corn farmers with claims in the Syngenta corn class action arising from the sale of two unapproved genetically-modified corn varieties in major U.S. corn export markets. Drew was a member of the trial team that successfully obtained a \$217.7 million verdict for Kansas corn farmers in June 2017. That verdict ranked as the 10th largest in the United States that year. The verdict ultimately led to a nationwide class settlement \$1.51 billion settlement with Syngenta that was approved by the U.S. District Court for the District of Kansas in December 2018. Drew also played a major role resolving the *In re Genetically Modified Rice Litigation* multidistrict litigation involving the contamination of U.S. rice supplies with a genetically-modified variety developed by an international chemical and agricultural company. He was a member of the court-appointed legal team that reached a \$750 million settlement on behalf of approximately 11,000 rice farmers across five states. Drew was also a member of the trial teams that took three bellwether trials to successful jury verdicts, one of which was ranked as the 42nd largest verdict in 2010 according to Verdict Search.

Clients also count on Drew to resolve many types of complex commercial disputes. He has significant experience in defending financial institutions against consumer actions involving automotive and personal loans and protecting homebuilders against defective construction claims brought by homeowners under the Texas



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Practices

Class Actions - Mass Torts
Commercial Litigation

Education

J.D., *cum laude*, Baylor University School of Law (2005)
B.A., Economics, Southwestern University (2002)

Bar Admissions

Texas

Court Admissions

United States District Court, Northern District of Texas
United States District Court, Eastern District of Texas
United States District Court, Southern District of Texas

Residential Construction Liability Act. In 2018 alone, Drew represented one lender in three separate arbitrations that went to final hearings. The consumers collectively sought \$2.38 million in damages, but recovered only \$8,818.66. Drew helps clients resolve disputes involving other issues as well, including breach of contract, breach of fiduciary duty, title issues and DTPA claims.

Drew is a frequent contributor on the firm's business law blog, [Tilting the Scales](#), where he provides commentary on trending business issues and how they impact the firm's clients from a legal perspective.

Experience

Class Action and Mass Tort Experience

In re Syngenta AG MIR162 Corn Litigation, 2:14-md-02591-JWL-JPO, United States District Court for the District of Kansas

- Member of legal team that reached a \$1.51 billion settlement with Syngenta AG and its subsidiaries arising out of Syngenta's sale of two genetically modified corn varieties unapproved in major U.S. corn export markets.
- Member of trial team that obtained a \$217.7 million verdict and judgment against Syngenta AG and its subsidiaries. The jury's verdict ranked as the 10th largest verdict of 2017 by *The National Law Journal*.

In re Genetically Modified Rice Litigation, 4:06-MD-01811-CDP, United States District Court for the Eastern District of Missouri

- Member of legal team that reached a \$750 million settlement with Bayer AG and its affiliates to compensate U.S. rice farmers relating to the discovery of Bayer's genetically modified LLRice in the U.S. rice supply
- Member of trial team that obtained a significant judgment in the Circuit Court of Lonoke County, Arkansas against Bayer AG, Bayer

CropScience AG, and Bayer CropScience LP for damages sustained by twelve rice farmers. The jury verdict, and corresponding judgment, awarded the twelve farmers one hundred percent of the compensatory damages sought (\$5,975,605.00) as well as punitive damages. The Arkansas Supreme Court affirmed the judgment in all respects in 2011. The jury's verdict ranked as the 42nd largest verdict in the United States in 2010 according to Verdict Search.

- Counsel for a Texas rice mill and exporter that settled claims with Bayer for a significant sum.
- Member of two trial teams that obtained significant judgments against Bayer on behalf of 2 Missouri, 2 Arkansas and 1 Mississippi farmer in separate trials in the U.S. District Court (Eastern District of Missouri)

In re Chinese-Manufactured Drywall Products Liability Litigation, 2:09-MD-2047-EEF, United States District Court for the Eastern District of Louisiana

- Lead counsel for homebuilder defending against claims made by homeowners for allegedly defective Chinese drywall

In re Tremont Securities Law, State Law and Insurance Litigation, 1:11-CV-01687-TPG, United States District Court for the Southern District of New York

- Counsel for trust that brought suit against “feeder fund” that invested with Bernard Madoff

Commercial Litigation Experience

- Defended consumer lender in arbitration where consumer sought \$1.858 million in damages based on alleged violations of the Texas Debt Collection Act (Texas Finance Code Chapter 392), Texas Credit Services Organization Act (Texas Finance Code Chapter 393), violations of the Texas Deceptive Trade Practices Act (Texas Business and Commerce Code Chapter 17) and intentional infliction

of emotional distress. The arbitrator awarded the consumer \$633.42.

- Defended consumer lender in arbitration where consumer sought approximately \$300,000 in damages for alleged violations of the Texas Credit Services Organization Act (Texas Finance Code Chapter 393), Texas usury statute (Texas Finance Code Chapter 305), Texas Deceptive Trade Practices Act (Texas Business and Commerce Code Chapter 17), and fraud. The arbitrator awarded the consumer \$400 in damages.
- Obtained summary judgment for client on Plaintiff's breach of contract, fraud and Texas Deceptive Trade Practices Act claims
- Obtained dismissal of breach of contract, fraud, and breach of fiduciary duty claims brought by limited liability company member against other members
- Obtained dismissal of consumers' Texas Deceptive Trade Practices Act claims for alleged defective diesel engine
- Obtained judgment for plaintiff on Texas Deceptive Trade Practices Act claims against HVAC company for misrepresentations concerning company's goods and services
- Lead counsel for defendant residential real estate developer in boundary dispute and trespass to try title litigation (lawsuit settled)
- Lead counsel for defendant waste management and recycling company concerning validity of restrictive covenant in deed (plaintiff dismissed lawsuit)
- Counsel for client responding to Department of Transportation Civil Investigation Demand

Press Releases

- "Final Approval of \$1.51 Billion Syngenta Corn Class Action

Settlement” (December 11, 2018)

- “Gray Reed Recognized in Nation’s 2017 Top 100 Verdicts List” (April 30, 2018)
- “Motion for Preliminary Approval for a \$1.51 Billion Settlement Filed in Syngenta Corn Nationwide Class Action Lawsuit ” (March 16, 2018)
- “Jury Awards Nearly \$218MM to Kansas Corn Producers In First Syngenta GMO Corn Class Action Lawsuit” (June 23, 2017)
- “The Tenth Circuit Denies Syngenta’s Attempt to Appeal the Order Granting Class Certification” (December 8, 2016)
- “U.S. District Judge Certifies Syngenta Corn Case as Class Action” (September 27, 2016)
- “Three Leading Firms in \$750 Million Rice Settlement File Class Action Suits against Syngenta on Behalf of Corn Farmers in Twenty States”, Firms Contend Syngenta Should be Held Accountable for Farmers’ Economic Damages (December 18, 2014)
- “Gray Reed Attorneys David Gair and Drew York Promoted to Shareholder” (August 23, 2013)
- “USDA Confirms Presence of Genetically Modified Wheat, Trade Impact Possible” (May 30, 2013)
- “Bayer Settles Suit With Rice Farmers in Texas, Other States” (July 1, 2011)
- “Jury Verdict Among Top 100 in 2010” (April 14, 2011)
- “Bayer Agrees to ‘Watershed’ Settlement in 7,000-Plaintiffs Rice Crop Contamination Litigation” (October 21, 2010)
- “Rice Farmers Win Second Critical Verdict in Case Against German

Maker of Genetically Modified Rice” (February 5, 2010)

- “William Chaney and Drew York successfully opposed Bayer AG” (July 17, 2008)

Speeches and Presentations

- “Legislative Protections for Texas Optometrists”, EyeCon 2014 (November 10, 2014)

Honors

- Named a Rising Star by Texas Super Lawyers (a Thomson Reuters company) as published in *Texas Monthly* and *Texas Super Lawyers* magazines (2008-2018)
- Member of trial team that obtained a \$217.7 million verdict and judgment against Syngenta AG and its subsidiaries arising out of Syngenta’s sale of two genetically modified corn varieties unapproved in major U.S. corn export markets. The jury’s verdict ranked as the 10th largest verdict of 2017 by *The National Law Journal*.
- Member of the plaintiffs’ trial team in *Randy Schafer et al. v. Bayer CropScience LP, et al.*, in which a Lonoke County, Arkansas jury returned a \$47,975,605.00 verdict for a dozen Arkansas rice farmers after two different types of Bayer CropScience’s experimental genetically modified rice were found in the United States rice supply in 2006 and 2007. That verdict was recognized as the 42nd largest verdict awarded for 2010 in Verdict Search’s “Top 100 Verdict in America for 2010”.

Organizational Involvement

Professional Involvement, Memberships & Affiliations

- State Bar of Texas

Community Involvement, Memberships & Affiliations

- Board of Visitors, Southwestern University