

William B. Chaney

Partner

Bill Chaney has successfully prosecuted and defended numerous complex commercial disputes with millions of dollars at stake, multiple parties and parallel litigation across several courts. He has resolved cases involving an incredibly diverse range of challenging issues, including fraudulent investments, genetically-modified crops, ATM and electronic payment processing, oil and gas mineral rights, a variety of aviation issues plus much more. Bill has also represented debtors, creditors and trustees in bankruptcy cases and adversary proceedings, and helped companies resolve creditor disputes to avoid filing bankruptcy.

More recently, Bill has played a key role in pioneering nationwide litigation involving genetically-modified crops. He served as a court-appointed member of the federal plaintiffs' executive committee that helped farmers, mills and exporters recover substantial financial losses due to contamination of U.S. rice supplies with a genetically-modified variety developed by an international chemical and agricultural company. Bill was also part of the legal team that tried four bellwether trials, three of which resulted in successful verdicts. He is currently serving in a similar leadership role in the ongoing Syngenta corn class action, focused on helping farmers and others hold GMO seed developers accountable for introducing unapproved genetically-modified seeds to U.S. corn supplies.

Bill also enjoys working with high-net-worth entrepreneurs and families as a lifelong advisor, dealmaker and problem-solver. He has helped clients with every opportunity and issue imaginable, including establishing new ventures, entering general business transactions, making investments and resolving disputes when deals go south. If their needs fall outside his practice focus, such as estate planning, family law disputes or unique transactions, Bill introduces clients to other lawyers in the firm with the right skills and experience to take lead and achieve the best result possible.

Experience



William B. Chaney

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Industries

Agriculture

Practices

Class Actions - Mass Torts
Commercial Litigation
Corporate Restructuring & Bankruptcy

Education

J.D., Southern Methodist University
Dedman School of Law (1977)
B.A., Trinity University (1974)

Bar Admissions

Texas

Court Admissions

United States Court of Appeals, Fifth
Circuit
United States District Court, Northern
District of Texas
United States District Court, Southern
District of Texas
United States District Court, Eastern
District of Texas
United States District Court, Western
District of Texas
United States Tax Court

Agriculture

- Represented rice farmers, mills and exporters in litigation involving contamination of United States long grain rice supplies with genetically modified rice variety developed by international chemical and agricultural company; court appointed member of Federal Court, Multi-District Plaintiffs' Executive Committee in litigation involving that contamination. Tried 4 bellwether trials for farmers in these proceedings, 3 of which tried to verdict.
- Represented U.S. corn farmers, grain handling facilities and ethanol production facilities bringing claims 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; obtained a \$217,700,000 verdict for more than 7,000 Kansas corn growers; secured a \$1.51 billion class settlement (pending final approval) to resolve pending cases against Syngenta by farmers, grain handling facilities and ethanol plants related to the launch of Agrisure Viptera and Agrisure Duracade.

Commercial Litigation

- Represented former hedge fund executive in claims asserted between executive and the fund. Tried the case to verdict.
- Represented state agency in discrimination claims involving Federal Low Income Housing Tax Credit allocation program. Tried case to court.
- Represented trustee in claims in accounting and related disputes brought by purported, but disputed, trust beneficiary.
- Represented clients in litigation involving cutting edge electronic discovery issues.
- Represented realty owner in dispute over ownership of oil and gas

mineral rights.

- Represented defendant in action for theft of proprietary information and breach of confidentiality agreement.
- Represented an independent ATM and credit card processing company in commercial litigation and disputes with credit card networks and member institutions.

Bankruptcy

- General representation of debtors and creditors, bankruptcy proceedings and avoidance adversary proceedings.
- Represented bankruptcy trustee in pursuit of equitable subordination claim against equity/debt holders.

Securities

- Represented plaintiffs in obtaining a class action securities settlement relating to fraud in real estate limited partnership offerings.
- Represented investors in tax shelter, securities litigation against major brokerage firm and obtained a settlement.
- Defended international investment banking firm in complex litigation involving fraud in securitized commercial mortgage transactions.
- Represented investors in securities fraud and breach of fiduciary duty claims against promoters of oil and gas drilling ventures.
- Represented securities clients of brokerage firm for unauthorized trading.
- Represented bank customer in claims against bank and securities trading affiliate.

Aviation

- Represented owner of aircraft engines in dispute with lessee upon foreign government seizure of the engines.
- Represented aircraft maintenance and repair firm in litigation with former director over alleged oral indemnification agreement.
- Represented aircraft owner in bankruptcy of lessee/freight company.
- Represented various investors in purchases of assets from bankruptcy proceedings, including patents and aircraft maintenance and repair facilities.

Business/Transactional

- Counsel to non-profit corporation on a variety of litigation and non-litigation business negotiation matters.
- Represented investors in aviation and related investments.

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)
- “Co-Lead Counsel Announce Preliminary Global Settlement Framework on Behalf of All American Corn Farmers” (September 27, 2017)
- “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)
- “Gray Reed Attorney Selected as Co-Lead Counsel for Syngenta Corn Multi-District Litigation” (January 26, 2015)
- “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)
- “USDA Confirms Presence of Genetically Modified Wheat, Trade Impact Possible” (May 30, 2013)
- “Rice Farmers Win Second Critical Verdict in Case Against German Maker of Genetically Modified Rice” (February 5, 2010)
- “Farmers Win Verdict in Case Against German Maker of Genetically Modified Rice” (December 8, 2009)

Thought Leadership

- “Lend Me Your Ear: An Update on the Syngenta Corn Case for Indiana Corn Farmers”, *Indiana Agricultural Law Foundation Newsletter* (November 14, 2016)

Speeches and Presentations

- “Understanding the 3 D’s of Agricultural Market Loss Litigation: Data, Duty and Damage”, American Agricultural Law Association Annual Symposium (November 7, 2019)
- “Nuts and Bolts of the Syngenta Corn Settlement: A Discussion with Co-Lead Counsel”, American Agriculture Law Association (June 4,

2018)

Honors

- AV Preeminent[®] rated (the highest possible Martindale-Hubbell Peer Review Rating designation)

Organizational Involvement

- American Bar Association
- Dallas Bar Association
- American Agricultural Law Association