

Thomas J. Rheaume, Jr.

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Mr. Rheaume serves as co-chair of Bodman's Litigation and Alternative Dispute Resolution Practice Group. He represents clients involved in complex commercial litigation matters and serves as local counsel for national and international law firms.

Prior to joining Bodman, he served as a law clerk to Justice Stephen J. Markman of the Michigan Supreme Court. Based on this experience, Mr. Rheaume is an integral team member of the firm's Appellate Law Practice Group. He has written appellate and amicus briefs in state and federal appellate courts, including the United States Supreme Court.

Mr. Rheaume graduated from Michigan State University College of Law ranked first in his class. While there, he served as an associate editor on *The Michigan State Law Review* and received Jurisprudence Awards for outstanding achievement in Secured Transactions, Professional

practices & industries

Appellate Law
Litigation and Alternative
Dispute Resolution
Insurance
Automotive and Industrial

education

Michigan State University
College of Law,
J.D., *summa cum laude*
Michigan State University,
B.S., *cum laude*

admissions

Michigan

Responsibility, Insurance Law, Construction Law, Decedents Estates & Trusts, Bankruptcy, Negotiations, and Income Taxation.

HONORS, AWARDS, AND RECOGNITION

- *The Best Lawyers in America 2026*, Commercial Litigation
- *The Best Lawyers in America: Ones to Watch 2022-2023*, Commercial Litigation
- *Benchmark Litigation 2017-2025*, "40 & Under Hot List"
- *Benchmark Litigation 2025*, "Future Star"
- *Michigan Rising Stars 2013-2025*, Business Litigation
- *DBusiness Magazine* "Top Lawyers" 2019-2025, Appellate Law

CIVIC, CULTURAL AND COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

- Pointers for Academic Excellence, Member of the Board of Directors
- Sigma Chi Fraternity — Michigan State University, Alumni Board of Directors
- Cornerstone Schools, Volunteer Mentor

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

- State Bar of Michigan, Member of the Litigation and Appellate Practice Sections
- Catholic Lawyers Society of Detroit, Member
- Former Young Leader Board Member, Detroit Economic Club
- Federalist Society, Immediate Past President of the Michigan Lawyers' Chapter

PUBLICATIONS

- Co-Author (with Gordon J. Kangas), "State Court Docket Watch: *Council of Organizations and Others for Education About Parochiaid v. State of Michigan*," Federalist Society for Law and Public Policy Studies, March 10, 2021
- Co-Author (with Gordon J. Kangas), State Court Docket

court admissions

U.S. Supreme Ct.
U.S. Ct. of Appeals, 6th Cir.
U.S. District Ct., E.D. Mich.
U.S. District Ct., W.D. Mich.

Watch: *Midwest Institute of Health, PLLC v. Governor of Michigan*,” Federalist Society for Law and Public Policy Studies, November 16, 2020

- Co-Author (with Gordon J. Kangas), “State Court Docket Watch: *Rafaelli, LLC v. Oakland County*,” Federalist Society for Law and Public Policy Studies, September 11, 2020

REPRESENTATIVE MATTERS

- **Defense of Municipality in Three Related Class Action Lawsuits**

Currently representing the City of Benton Harbor, Michigan, and several city officials in connection with three related class action lawsuits arising from the discovery that certain homes had tap water contaminated with lead. Achieved dismissal of two of the class actions and are appealing a denial of dismissal of the third.

- **Defense of Local Government in Basement Flooding Class Actions**

Currently representing Wayne County, Michigan and a related local drainage district authority in four separate homeowner class action lawsuits related to flooding following a severe storm in 2019.

- **Representation of Michigan Association of Non-public Schools**

Successfully represented Michigan Association of Non-public Schools and all Christian religious schools in a lawsuit seeking to enjoin state action that prevented religious schools from conducting in-person learning. *Michigan Association of Non-Public Schools, et al v. Gordon*, No. 20-cv-01174.

- **Representation of Health Insurer in Complex Multidistrict Class Action Litigation Alleging Antitrust Violations**

Represents Michigan’s largest health care insurer in a national class action involving hundreds of parties. The lawsuit, which challenges the structure of the national Blue Cross Blue Shield system, is one of the largest multi-

district litigation actions in the U.S. and could have a profound impact on healthcare delivery for millions of Americans. In re Blue Cross Blue Shield Antitrust Litigation (MDL No. 2406)

- **Representation of Health Insurer in Litigation Alleging Antitrust Violations**

Represents one of Michigan's largest health care insurers in antitrust litigation alleging that its contracts with various hospital providers were anticompetitive and unreasonably restrained trade in violation of both the Sherman Act and the Michigan Antitrust Reform Act.

- **Representation of Catholic Dioceses**

Represents Catholic Dioceses in an ongoing Attorney General investigation related to alleged clergy abuse. As counsel, interfaces with the Attorney General's office concerning the investigation and advises the client of its rights and duties related to the investigation.

- **Representation of National Banking Institution as Local Counsel in High-Profile Trial**

The jury returned a verdict in favor of our client on plaintiff's claims that the bank violated its constitutional right to enter into contracts. *Life for Relief and Development v. Talmer Bancorp, Inc., et. al.*, 2:12-cv-13550-DPH-RSW.

- **Representation of a Catholic Church and Members of Its Clergy in a Defamation Matter before the Michigan Appellate Courts**

Represented a Catholic church and members of its clergy in a defamation matter. On remand from the Michigan Supreme Court, the Court of Appeals ruled in favor of our clients, holding in a published opinion that a false accusation of simple battery will only constitute defamation per se if the crime of battery subjects the plaintiff to involves "moral turpitude" or "infamous punishment" which did not exist in this case. *Lakin v. Rund*, No. 323695, 2016 WL 7022886 (Mich. Ct. App. Dec. 1, 2016).

- **Representation of a Health Insurer in Antitrust Actions Brought by U.S. Department of Justice and Its**

Competitors

Represented one of the state's largest health care insurance companies against a series of lawsuits alleging violations of the Sherman Act and state antitrust laws.

- **Representation of an Employer before the Michigan Court of Appeals on a Workers' Compensation Claim**

Represented an employer before the Michigan Court of Appeals regarding whether a state circuit court had subject matter jurisdiction over the employee's workers' compensation claim. *Bessinger v. Our Lady of Good Counsel/Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Detroit*, No. 316143, 2014 WL 4347508 (Mich. Ct. App. Sept. 2, 2014), appeal denied, 497 Mich. 973 (2015).

- **Representation of a Health Insurance Provider before State Supreme Court, Holding that Injured Motorist Is Not Entitled to Double Recovery**

Represented a health insurance provider before the Michigan Supreme Court, where it held that an injured motorist was not entitled to recover from both his own health insurer and the other motorist's automobile insurer for the same injuries incurred in an accident. *Harris v. Auto Club Ins. Ass'n*, 835 N.W.2d 356 (Mich. 2013).

- **Appellate Defense of Bankruptcy Court Decision Regarding Litigation Fees and Costs**

Represented appellee-debtor on appeal before a U.S. District Court related to a creditor's contention that the bankruptcy court erred in its calculation of litigation fees and costs that the debtor owed to the creditor after years of contentious and costly litigation. *John Richards Homes Building Co., LLC v. Adell*, No. 15-10007, 2015 WL 5121359 (E.D. Mich. Aug. 31, 2015).

- **Representation of Pension Plan on Appeal Before Michigan Court of Appeals**

Represented appellee-pension plan before the Michigan Court of Appeals after appellants-pension holders appealed a summary judgment ruling that shut down their action seeking an equitable accounting of their employer's pension plan. *Macey v. Archdiocese of Detroit Priests' Pension Plan, Inc.*, No. 318617, 2015 WL 1214589

(Mich. Ct. App. Mar. 17, 2015).

- **Representation of a Prisoner Before the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit for Eight Amendment Rights Violations**

Represented a state prisoner that alleged that a former corrections sergeant violated his Eighth Amendment rights. *Roberson v. Torres*, 770 F.3d 398 (6th Cir. 2014).

- **Representation of a Catholic School Before the Michigan Court of Appeals, Obtaining Reversal and Agreement that Trial Court Lacked Jurisdiction**

Represented a Catholic school on an interlocutory appeal before the Michigan Court of Appeals, successfully arguing that the trial court lacked subject matter jurisdiction over a student's asserted discrimination claim under the Persons with Disabilities Civil Rights Act (PWDCRA) under the ecclesiastical abstention doctrine. *Winkler v. Marist Fathers of Detroit, Inc.*, No. 323511, 2015 WL 7079054 (Mich. Ct. App. Nov. 12, 2015).

- **Representation of Mortgagor on Appeal against Fannie Mae to Recover Overpayment for Redemption of Foreclosed Property**

Appeal of a contractual dispute over the amount paid by appellant-mortgagor when it redeemed a property on which appellee-Fannie Mae had foreclosed. *Royal Manor Apts, LLC v. Fed. Nat'l Mortgage Ass'n*, 614 Fed. App'x 228 (6th Cir. 2015).