

Snell & Wilmer



Joseph Kanefield

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Main Bio

For nearly 30 years, Joseph Kanefield has assisted clients with legal issues affecting state and local government as a skilled litigator and appellate counsel. He has held positions at the highest levels of Arizona State Government and applies that experience daily to advance his clients' pressing needs.

Joseph helps individuals, organizations, and government officials navigate the increasingly complex regulatory environment governing political activity. He advises clients on an array of issues including election law, campaign finance law, constitutional law, civil and appellate litigation, gaming law, licensure, state and local tax matters, procurement, and public-private partnerships. Joseph also counsels clients on strategic legal questions arising from pending legislation and government inquiries and has extensive experience in government relations at all levels.

Joseph has been involved in some of the most important issues facing the State of Arizona, including cases involving election law, immigration, consumer fraud, white collar crime, civil rights, and constitutional governance. He has appeared and argued in dozens of federal and state appellate proceedings, including before the U.S. Supreme Court. Prior to joining Snell & Wilmer, Joseph served as chief deputy and chief of staff to Arizona Attorney General Mark Brnovich. In this capacity, Joseph oversaw close to 500 attorneys that represented the State of Arizona in matters such as consumer protection, civil rights law, white collar crimes, organized crime, public corruption, illegal drugs, and statewide felony conviction appeals.

Prior to working in the Attorney General's office, Joseph was a partner at Ballard Spahr for eight years where he chaired the firm's political law practice group. Joseph also served as General Counsel to Arizona Governor Jan Brewer, advising on litigation involving the state budget, civil rights, immigration, gaming, and health care issues. Before joining the governor's office, he served in the Arizona Secretary of State's office as state election director and in-house counsel. He also was an assistant attorney general and an attorney with the Arizona Department of Revenue.

Joseph served as President of the State Bar of Arizona from 2011-2012 and is a past-President of the State Bar Young Lawyers Division. He also served four terms as an elected representative to the State Bar Board of Governors from Maricopa County. Joseph has served on numerous boards and committees, including the City of Phoenix Judicial Selection Advisory Board, the Commission on Elected Officials' Salaries, the Access to Justice Task Force, the United Blood Services Community Leadership Council, and the Phoenix Boys Choir.

Joseph is a Professor of Practice at the University of Arizona College of Law and has taught election law since 2007. In 2013, he was elected to membership in the American Law Institute. Joseph has written several articles on election law for the Arizona Attorney magazine and has taught dozens of continuing legal

education courses covering topics such as election law, redistricting, state and local tax, and legal writing. Joseph holds an AV Preeminent® Peer Review Rating from Martindale-Hubbell®

Joseph received his undergraduate degree in economics from Arizona State University and his law degree from the University of Arizona.

Education

- University of Arizona, James E. Rogers College of Law (J.D.)
- Arizona State University (B.S.)

Professional Memberships & Activities

- ProVisors
- American Bar Association House of Delegates
 - Arizona State Delegate (2023-2026)
- American Bar Association
- American Bar Foundation, Fellow
- American Law Institute
- Maricopa County Bar Association
- State Bar of Arizona
 - President (2011-2012)
 - Board of Governors (2001-2013)
 - Young Lawyers Division, President (1999-2000)
 - Election Law Continuing Legal Education Program, Chair (2006-2020)
 - Access to Justice Task Force (2002-2004)
- The University of Arizona James E. Rogers College of Law
 - Professor of Practice, Election Law (2007-Present)
 - Leaders in the Law (2016)
 - Board of Visitors (2003-Present)
- City of Phoenix Judicial Selection Advisory Board (2014-2021)
- Arizona Equal Justice Foundation, President of the Board of Directors (2018-2019)
- Arizona Commission on Salaries for Elective State Officers (2012-2018)
- Task Force on Lawyer Ethics, Professionalism, and the Unauthorized Practice of Law (2016-2017)
- Transition team for Arizona Secretary of State-Elect Michele Reagan (2016)
- Task Force on the Review of the Role and Governance Structure of the State Bar of Arizona (2014-2015)
- Committee on the Impact of Wireless, Mobile Technologies and Social Media on Court Proceedings (2012-2013)

Representative Presentations & Publications

- "[U.S. Supreme Court Holds That States May Disqualify State Candidates Under Insurrection Clause](#)," Co-Author, Snell & Wilmer Legal Alert (March 15, 2024)
- "[Emergency Election Procedures Enacted for 2024 Arizona Elections](#)," Co-Author, Snell & Wilmer Legal Alert (March 1, 2024)
- "[Eighth Circuit Ends Private Enforcement of Key Provision of the Voting Rights Act](#)," Co-Author, Snell & Wilmer Legal Alert (February 8, 2024)
- "[How Election Official Errors Impact Elections](#)," Co-Author, Arizona Attorney (November 2023)
- "[The Legal Consequences of Election Official Errors Involving Referendums](#)," Co-Author, Snell & Wilmer Legal Alert (August 17, 2023)
- "[Arizona Supreme Court Clarifies Methods to Challenge Citizen Initiatives](#)," Co-Author, Snell & Wilmer Legal Alert (August 3, 2023)
- "[The 800-Pound Gorilla in the Room: SCOTUS Rejects the Independent State Legislature Theory](#)," Co-Author, Snell & Wilmer Legal Alert (July 14, 2023)
- "[Clear for Takeoff: Arizona Court of Appeals Upholds Sky Harbor's Customer Facility Charge](#)," Co-Author, Snell & Wilmer Legal Alert (June 27, 2023)
- "Litigation Strategies on the Shift from Federalism to State Rights," Presenter/Panelist, American Bar Association 2023 Litigation Section Annual Conference (April 19, 2023)
- "[What we accomplished in Arizona](#)," Author, Washington Examiner (January 7, 2023)
- "The Costs of Democracy: How Can Businesses – and Individuals – Make Their Voices Heard?" Author, In Business Magazine (July 2017)
- "The Consequences of Election Administration Errors," Author, Arizona Attorney (November 2016)
- "Joe Kanefield: A Winding Road from Republican to Democrat to Republican," Arizona Capital Times (October 10, 2016)
- "Arizona Lawsuits Shape National Electoral Policy," Author, The Record Reporter (July 29, 2015)
- "The Arizona Legislature Should Restore Clarity to Our Campaign Finance Laws," Author, Arizona Attorney (March 2015)
- "Recent Prosecution Presents Risks of Coordination, PACs," Author, The Record Reporter (March 16, 2015)
- "Supreme Court's Campaign Contribution Decision To Have Substantial Impact," Co-Author, Arizona Capitol Times (April 28, 2014)
- "A Final Chapter?" Author, The Record Reporter, (August 16, 2013)
- "President's Message," monthly column in Arizona Attorney Magazine:
 - "It's Been A Great Ride," June 2012
 - "Lawyer–Artists Strike a Balance," May 2012
 - "The Price of Democracy," April 2012
 - "The Bar and Politics," March 2012
 - "A Century of Service," February 2012
 - "Justice Is Our Future," January 2012
 - "Tech Tools," December 2011
 - "Defending the Defenders," November 2011

- "Public Lawyers and Public Service," October 2011
 - "Goals To Match a Bar's Mission," September 2011
- "Elections Attorneys, Firms Reap Benefits of Litigious Campaigns," Interviewer, Phoenix Business Journal (October 5, 2012)
- "The Arizona Redistricting Fight: Round Five," Co-author, Arizona Attorney (September 2011)
- "Who Speaks for Arizona: The Respective Roles of the Governor and Attorney General When the State Is Named in a Lawsuit," Author, Arizona Law Review (Summer 2011)
- "State Bar President Joe Kanefield: Leader of the Band," Arizona Attorney (July/August 2011)
- "A Supreme Conflict at the Summit of Arizona Government," Co-author, Arizona Attorney (February 2010)
- "Election Law in Arizona," Author, Arizona Attorney (November 2006)
- "Promoting Access to Justice in Arizona: An Urgent Need," Co-author, Arizona Attorney (April 2004)
- "Could Florida's Election Hurricane Happen in Arizona?" Author, Arizona Attorney (March 2001)

Professional Recognition & Awards

- AV Preeminent Rating®, Martindale-Hubbell® (2004-Present)
- Arizona Capitol Times Leader of the Year (2017)
- Arizona Capitol Times Best Capitol/Political Lawyer (2017)
- Southwest Super Lawyers for Legislative & Governmental Affairs (2017)
- Ranking Arizona: The Best of Arizona Business, Government Relations (2013)
- State Bar of Arizona Distinguished Public Lawyer (2011)
- Frank X. Gordon, Jr. Traveling Award (Access to Justice Task Force) (2005)
- Judge Learned Hand Emerging Leadership Award (2004)
- State Bar of Arizona Outstanding Young Lawyer (2002)

Community Involvement

- United Blood Services Community Leadership Council, Member (2005-2015)
 - Chair (2008-2009)
 - Vice Chair (2007)
- Phoenix Boys Choir
 - Board of Trustees (2004-2007)

Previous Professional Experience

- Arizona Attorney General Mark Brnovich's Office, Chief Deputy & Chief of Staff (2019-2023)
- Ballard Spahr LLP, Partner (2011-2019)
- Arizona Governor Jan Brewer's Office, General Counsel (2009-2011)
- Arizona Secretary of State's Office, State Election Director & Counsel to the Secretary of State (2004-2009)
- Arizona Attorney General's Office, Special Assistant Attorney General (2003-2004)

- National Association of Attorneys General, Supreme Court Fellow (2003)
- Solicitor General's Office, Assistant Attorney General (1999-2003)
- Agency Counsel Division, Tax Section Assistant Attorney General (1995-1999)
- Arizona Department of Revenue, Taxpayer Bill of Rights Coordinator (1994-1995)
- El Paso Natural Gas Company, Office of General Counsel, Law Clerk (1993)

Bar Admissions

- Arizona

Court Admissions

- United States Court of Appeals, Ninth Circuit
- United States Court of Appeals, Tenth Circuit
- United States District Court, District of Arizona
- United States Supreme Court