

Snell & Wilmer



William E. Peterson, P.C.

Partner | Reno

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Main Bio

Bill Peterson has been a commercial, administrative and personal injury litigator for over 30 years. His practice encompasses energy law, utilities, complex torts and all facets of commercial litigation in state and federal court. Bill has considerable trial experience, having obtained the largest jury verdict in Lassen County, California; Carson City, Nevada (both since superseded), and a \$3 million judgment in a wrongful death case in Lyon County, Nevada. He has also succeeded in reversing regulatory decisions disallowing over \$40 million in investment and/or expense. Bill has tried over 40 cases to jury verdict and approximately 50 bench trials to judgment, many of several weeks duration. He has over 20 reported decisions in the Federal Supplement, Federal Reporter, Nevada Supreme Court Reports and the California Appellate Reports. Bill has successfully defended numerous clients in cases of significant exposure.

Bill also spent ten years as the Senior Vice President, General Counsel and Corporate Secretary for Sierra Resources (now NV Energy), Nevada Power Company and Sierra Pacific Power Company. In his position as general counsel for Sierra Pacific and Nevada Power Company Bill supervised, participated in or personally led over 30 public utility proceedings in Nevada and California and at the FERC dealing with general rate cases, energy cases, merger and acquisition matters, contract disputes and asset dispositions. He has continued his public utility practice and expertise by serving as general counsel to the 14th largest telephone company in the United States with ILEC, CLEC, televideo and broadband data lines of business in California and Kansas, and is outside counsel to several large power suppliers in the Sierra Nevada area. Bill is also general counsel for a water sanitation utility in Northern Nevada.

In 2018, Bill was honored by the State Bar of Nevada as the recipient of the Presidential Award, presented annually to a bar member practicing 20 years or more whose conduct, honesty and integrity represents the highest standards of the legal profession. Also in 2018, the Supreme Court of Nevada appointed Bill to its Nevada Rules of Civil Procedure Committee, which completed an exhaustive review resulting in changes to the Nevada Rules of Civil Procedure (NRCP), the Nevada Rules of Appellate Procedure (NRAP), and the Nevada Electronic Filing and Conversion Rules (NEFCR), all of which went into effect March 1, 2019. Bill also serves as a member of Judiciary Committee of American College of Trial Lawyers.

Education

- University of Southern California, Gould School of Law (J.D.)

- Order of the Coif
 - Law Review
- College of Holy Cross, University of California Berkeley, and North Carolina State University (B.A., *cum laude*)

Professional Memberships & Activities

- Nevada Supreme Court's Nevada Rules of Civil Procedure Committee, Member (2018-2019)
- American College of Trial Lawyers, Fellow
 - Judiciary Committee (2019 to 2020)
 - State Chairman (2010-2011)
- American Board of Trial Advocates, Advocate
- Washoe County Bar Association
- Los Angeles County Bar Association

Representative Presentations & Publications

- "[Executive Profile: Bill Peterson Lifetime of Law](#)," Profiled, Northern Nevada Business Weekly (July 2018)
- "[Thought Leaders: The Changing Legal Landscape in a Growth Market](#)," Quoted, Northern Nevada Business Weekly (May 7, 2018)
- "Constitutional Right to Preliminary Hearing for Pretrial Detainees," 48 Southern California Law Review, 158 (1975)

Professional Recognition & Awards

- Presidential Award, State Bar of Nevada, Recognizing a Lifetime of Achievement in the Law (2018)
- Top Rank Attorney, Nevada Business Magazine (2013-2021, 2023-2024)
- The Best Lawyers in America®, Administrative/Regulatory Law, Bet-the-Company Litigation (2016-2024); Commercial Litigation, Energy Law, Land Use & Zoning Litigation, Real Estate Litigation (2008-2024); Regulatory Enforcement (SEC, Telecom, Energy), Trusts and Estates Litigation (2015-2024); Securities Litigation (2008-2013)
 - Reno Lawyer of the Year, Bet-the-Company Litigation (2017, 2022)
 - Reno Lawyer of the Year, Trusts and Estates Litigation (2016, 2018)
 - Reno Lawyer of the Year, Energy Law (2019)
 - Reno Lawyer of the Year, Administrative/Regulatory Law (2020, 2023)
 - Reno Lawyer of the Year, Real Estate Litigation (2021, 2023)
- Mountain States Super Lawyers®, Civil Litigation: Defense (2013-2023), Commercial Litigation, Utilities (2008-2012)
 - Top 100 Lawyers (2013)

Community Involvement

- Special Counsel to Quadriplegia Medicaid Recipients, Washoe County, Nevada (2009-present)

Previous Professional Experience

- Morris Peterson, Partner (2004-2012)
- Sierra Resources, Sierra Pacific Power and Nevada Power (now NV Energy), Senior Vice President, General Counsel and Corporate Secretary (1994-2003)
- Woodburn and Wedge, Senior Litigator, Partner, Associate (1977-1993)
- Gray Cary Ames & Frye (DLA Piper), Associate (1976-1977)
- Supreme Court of Nevada, Law Clerk to the Honorable John Mowbray (dec.) (1975-1976)

Bar Admissions

- California
- Nevada

Court Admissions

- Supreme Court of California
- Supreme Court of Nevada
- United States Court of Appeals, Ninth Circuit
- United States District Court, All Districts of California
- United States District Court, District of Nevada