

# Thomas B. Quinn

## Partner and General Counsel

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Tom Quinn loves the art of persuasion. He got his first lessons in this critical skill through door-to-door campaigning in college for candidates who had dreams of changing the world through public service, and later by gathering thousands of petition signatures for initiative campaigns to reform state government. Through all those one-on-one encounters with everyday people in their homes, on street corners, or in meeting halls, Tom learned what it takes to move a person to support a point of view or a cause.



The fire and conviction that fueled his civic activism are the same qualities that make Tom a tireless and effective advocate for his clients in private practice. Timidity has never been one of his problems; in one of his first cases as a junior associate, he and two other young lawyers sued the Illinois legislature to prevent the payment of public funds for a legislative junket to the California wine country.

Years later, in what eventually resulted in landmark litigation, Tom defended a First and Fourteenth Amendment constitutional challenge to the fair housing programs of nine local governments through an extended trial, a Seventh Circuit appeal, and a petition for certiorari to the U.S. Supreme Court.

Tom has forged his reputation as a commercial litigator over more than four decades of trying and winning cases at all levels in state and federal trial courts around the country and in forums like the International Trade Commission. But he also understands that every dispute does not require the time, expense, and disruption of extended pre-trial and trial proceedings. Through his experience with high stakes commercial mediations and alternative dispute resolution proceedings before International Institute for Conflict Prevention and Resolution (CPR Institute), the American Arbitration Association, and JAMS, Tom knows how to obtain a successful result for his clients before the cost of litigation overwhelms its risks or rewards.

## EXPERIENCE

### Clerkships

Judicial Extern — Hon. Matthew Tobriner, California Supreme Court (1977)

### Representative Engagements

- Tom led a successful challenge to the constitutionality of the Illinois Soft Drink Act under the U.S. Commerce and Contracts Clauses. Arguing the new act gutted the contractual protections beverage companies relied on to ensure the performance of distributors and bottlers, Tom convinced the courts to strike down the legislation in its entirety. This landmark decision preserved the constitutional right of beverage companies to manage relationships with their bottlers.

- Tom has successfully defended dozens of officers and directors of publicly traded companies in securities lawsuits and shareholder derivative litigation involving claims of fraudulent misrepresentation, breach of fiduciary duty, waste of corporate assets, insider trading, and other wrongdoing.
- The board of directors of an international healthcare company relied on Tom to represent their Special Litigation Committee during a yearlong investigation of allegations of corporate waste, abuse of control and breach of fiduciary duty by its officers and directors. This investigation found no evidence of wrongdoing and resulted in a prompt settlement of the dispute.
- Tom has successfully defended manufacturers of consumer goods and food and beverage products against claims of breach of contract, breach of good faith and fair dealing, tortious interference with business relations, and consumer fraud in state and federal courts across the country.
- Sparing an international food and beverage company the cost and disruption of a prolonged litigation, Tom creatively mediated a decade-old, multimillion-dollar royalty dispute involving a critical product line. This strategy realigned the client's business relationship with its royalty partners and rationalized sales and marketing strategies in the product line.
- Tom defeated a putative class action asserting stock option rights in connection with a merger transaction launched by a Fortune 500 consumer products company. Then he successfully defended the trial court victory in the Ohio Court of Appeals and prevented departing executives of the target company from claiming that the merger entitled them to a "double dip" of stock option rights.
- In multiple patent and trademark actions in the International Trade Commission and federal district and appellate courts, Tom has protected the patent rights of manufacturers of heat exchange technology, computers, beverage equipment and other consumer products.
- Tom successfully defended a First and Fourteenth Amendment constitutional challenge to the fair housing programs of nine local governments through an eight-week trial, a Seventh Circuit appeal, and a petition for writ of certiorari to the U.S. Supreme Court. This landmark litigation established the constitutional right of integrated communities to enact affirmative marketing and other programs to preserve their racial diversity.

## CREDENTIALS

### Education

Stanford Law School, J.D., 1978  
Stanford University, B.A., *with honors and distinction*

### Bar Admissions

California  
Illinois  
U.S. Supreme Court  
U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit  
U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit  
U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit  
U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit  
U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit  
U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of California  
U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California  
U.S. District Court for the Central District of Illinois  
U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Ohio



U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois (Trial Bar)  
U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Illinois  
U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Wisconsin

## Professional Memberships

American Bar Association  
Section of Litigation

## Honors & Awards

The Best Lawyers in America, *Best Lawyers*® (Commercial Litigation, 2013-2025)  
Illinois Leading Lawyer in Commercial Litigation, *Law Bulletin Media Leading Lawyers*  
(2004-2010, 2012-2025)  
Stand-out Lawyers, *Thomson Reuters* (2022)  
Litigation Star, *Euromoney's Benchmark Litigation* (2009, 2012-2013)  
Illinois Super Lawyers, *Thomson Reuters* (2005-2007)

## COMMUNITY SERVICE

Stanford Associates  
Fenwick High School, Life Trustee