

# Brian O'Connor Watson

## Partner

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Brian gets things done: a nationally ranked lawyer with engineering and business expertise who's just as comfortable trying cases in the courtroom as he is creating solutions at the negotiation table.

Early in his career, Brian finished graduate degrees in engineering, business, and law—all while working full time and cherishing caffeine. He's worked on the 100-degree factory floor, out in the unpredictable field, in the innovative tech centers, and at company headquarters.

As a trusted advisor, skilled negotiator, and courtroom lawyer, Brian has successfully represented clients through every stage of litigation from pre-suit resolution through hard-fought trials and verdicts to complex appeals and enforcement. Clients praise his responsiveness, work ethic, and team approach.

Brian also dedicates countless hours to pro bono and community service in a broad range of areas from constitutional and civil rights, employment and housing discrimination, family and consumer law, to public benefits and immigration. He's deeply committed to helping those most in need.



## EXPERIENCE

### Clerkships

Judicial Extern, Honorable Samuel Der-Yeghiayan, U.S. District Court, Northern District of Illinois  
Judicial Extern, Honorable Ronald S. Davis, Circuit Court of Cook County, Illinois, Law Division

Brian has personally litigated cases throughout the country, tried cases to verdict, handled more than a dozen appeals, and serves in national coordinating and lead counsel roles.

### Representative Engagements

- *In re Cotter Corp., (N.S.L.)*, Nos. 21-1160, 21-1165, 2022 WL 67845 (8th Cir. Jan. 7, 2022) (winning reversal in nuclear radiation case under Price-Anderson Act)
- *Lynch v. USF Propco II, LLC*, No. 19SL-CC03201 (Mo. Cir. Ct. Nov. 12, 2021) (winning summary judgment in alter ego and premises liability case)
- *Exelon Bus. Servs. Co., LLC v. Pelco Structural, LLC*, No. 16-CV-611, 2020 WL 7027565 (N.D. Ill. Nov. 30, 2020) (winning verdict of \$2.75 million in construction case)
- *Dish Network L.L.C. v. Cox Media Grp.*, No. 20 C 570, 2020 WL 4053604 (N.D. Ill. July 20, 2020), 2020 WL 5296910 (N.D. Ill. Sept. 4, 2020) (winning dismissal and defeating preliminary injunction in contract and business tort case)
- *In re Appointment of Special Prosecutor (Laquan McDonald)*, No. 2016 MR 000501 (Ill. Cir. Ct. Cook Cnty. 2016-19)

- *Gonzales v. WATCO Companies LLC et al.*, No. 2015-00615 (Tex. Dist. Ct. Harris Cnty. Dec. 16, 2019) (winning summary judgment in catastrophic railroad injury case)
- *Krik v. Exxon Mobil Corp.*, 870 F.3d 669 (7th Cir. 2017) (winning appeal in products liability case)
- *Pecher v. Owens-Illinois, Inc.*, 859 F.3d 396 (7th Cir. 2017) (winning appeal on a product liability theory against a patent licensor)
- *Am. Senior Communities, LLC v. Burkhart*, No. 1:17-CV-03273-TWP-DML, 2019 WL 6170064 (S.D. Ind. Nov. 19, 2019), 2019 WL 4688708 (S.D. Ind. Sept. 26, 2019) (winning pretrial motions and prosecuting complex civil RICO, fraud, and business tort case)
- *Major League Baseball Properties & Chicago Cubs Baseball Club v. Stevens et al.*, No. 1:16-cv-09140 (N.D. Ill. Sept. 22, 2016) (winning injunctive relief and judgment in trademark infringement action)
- *Wiederhold v. Deere & Co.*, No. 1316-CV13192, 2016 WL 4621145 (Mo. Cir. Ct. June 30, 2016) (winning defense verdict in products liability case)
- *Suoja v. Owens-Illinois, Inc.*, 211 F. Supp. 3d 1196 (W.D. Wis. 2016) (winning defense verdict in products liability case)
- *Krik v. Owens-Illinois, Inc.*, No. 10-CV-07435, 2015 WL 5050143 (N.D. Ill. Aug. 25, 2015) (winning defense verdict in products liability action)
- *Arendt v. Owens-Illinois, Inc.*, No. 13-C-727, 2015 WL 3452549 (E.D. Wis. June 1, 2015) (winning summary judgment in wrongful death products liability case)
- *Smego v. Mitchell*, No. 3:08-cv-03142-SEM-TSH, 2015 WL 728550 (C.D. Ill. Feb. 20, 2015), jury verdict (Feb. 27, 2015) (winning exclusion of plaintiff's liability experts in constitutional dental care action and trying case to verdict)
- *Padilla v. Hunter Douglas Window Coverings, Inc.*, 14 F. Supp. 3d 1127 (N.D. Ill. 2014) (winning exclusion of plaintiff's liability experts in wrongful death products liability case)
- *Krik v. Crane Co.*, 76 F. Supp. 3d 747 (N.D. Ill. 2014); *Krik v. Crane Co.*, 71 F. Supp. 3d 784 (N.D. Ill. 2014) (winning exclusion of plaintiff's liability experts in products liability case)
- *Ahnert v. Brand Insulation Inc.*, No. 13-C-1456, 2014 WL 4257740 (E.D. Wis. Aug. 29, 2014) (winning summary judgment in wrongful death product liability case)
- *Boyer v. Weyerhaeuser Co.*, 39 F. Supp. 3d 1036 (W.D. Wis. 2014) (winning dismissal of product liability theory against a patent licensor)
- *Bowles v. Owens-Illinois, Inc.*, 2013 IL App (4th) 121072, 996 N.E.2d 1267 (4th Dist. 2013) (winning appeal of summary judgment in complex civil conspiracy and product liability case)
- *In re Asbestos Prods. Liab. Litig. (No. VI)*, No. 13-1999, 2013 WL 3295312 (3d Cir. June 26, 2013) (winning dismissal of appeal in consolidated product liability actions)
- *Lamb v. Graco Children's Prods. Inc.*, 291 F.R.D. 665 (N.D. Fla. 2013) (winning summary judgment in putative consumer fraud class case)
- *In re Asbestos Prods. Liab. Litig. (No. VI)*, 289 F.R.D. 424 (E.D. Pa. 2013) (winning exclusion of expert testimony in consolidated product liability case)
- *Ellis v. Pneumo Abex Corp.*, No. 11-cv-01128, 2013 WL 1099016 (E.D. Pa. Jan. 3, 2013) (winning summary judgment in complex civil conspiracy and product liability action)
- *Purepecha Enters. Inc. v. El Matador Spices & Dry Chiles*, No. 11-cv-2569, 2012 WL 3686776 (N.D. Ill. Aug. 24, 2012) (winning summary judgment in a trademark infringement and unfair competition case)
- *McCune v. Graco Children's Prods. Inc.*, 495 Fed. App'x 535 (5th Cir. 2012) (winning appeal of defense verdict in product liability case)
- *Posey v. Pruger*, 762 F. Supp. 2d 1086 (N.D. Ill. 2011) (winning dismissal of civil rights case)

## CREDENTIALS

### Education

Chicago-Kent College of Law, J.D., 2010, *cum laude*

Dean's Honor List

Merit Scholarship

CALI Awards for highest grade awarded in The Corporation and the Constitution, Disability Law, Energy Law, Illinois Civil Procedure, Intellectual Property in the High Tech Era, Legal Writing IV, Litigation Technology, Mediation, Patent Office Practice, and Police Misconduct Litigation

Purdue University, West Lafayette, M.S., Engineering, 2005

DePaul University, Kellstadt Graduate School of Business, M.B.A., Applied Economics, Operations Management, 2004, *with distinction, Delta Mu Delta*

Michigan Technological University, B.S., Electrical Engineering, Economics Minor, 2002, *cum laude*

### Bar Admissions

Illinois

Indiana

Missouri

Wisconsin

U.S. Supreme Court

U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit

U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit

U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit

U.S. District Court for the Central District of Illinois

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 Northern District of Indiana

U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Indiana

U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Missouri

U.S. District Court for the Western District of Missouri

U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Wisconsin

U.S. District Court for the Western District of Wisconsin

### Professional Memberships

American Bar Association

Chicago Bar Association

Defense Research Institute (DRI)

Federal Bar Association

Illinois State Bar Association

Missouri Bar Association

Wisconsin Bar Association

## Honors & Awards

The Best Lawyers in America, *Best Lawyers*® (Commercial Litigation, 2022)  
Chicago Notable Rising Stars in Law, *Crain's Chicago Business* (2021)  
Illinois Emerging Lawyer in Commercial Litigation, Personal Injury Defense Law: General, and  
Products Liability Defense Law, *Law Bulletin Media Leading Lawyers* (2017-2021)  
Top 100 Emerging Lawyers, *Law Bulletin Media Leading Lawyers* (2020)

## PUBLICATIONS & PRESENTATIONS

"3 Ways Law Firms Can Guard Against Burnout," (co-author) *Of Counsel: The Legal and Practice Management Report* (January 2021)  
"Does Allowing Employees to Work From Home Put Corporations at Risk of Expanding Where They Can Be Properly Sued Under Illinois's Venue Statute? The Illinois Supreme Court Weighs In," (co-author) *Illinois State Bar Association's Bench & Bar Section Council Newsletter* (November 2020, vol. 51, no. 4)  
"Brian O'Connor Watson, Skilled Advocate Goes Toe-to-toe With Tough Trial Law Adversaries," (editorial profile) *Emerging Lawyers Magazine* (February 2020)  
"Appellate Court Clarifies 'Sole Proximate Cause,'" (author) *Illinois State Bar Association's Bench & Bar Section Council Newsletter* (August 2018, vol. 49, no. 2)  
"The Seventh Circuit Rejects Plaintiff's Cancer Causation Theory," *Illinois State Bar Association's Bench & Bar Section Council Newsletter* (September 2017)  
"Recent Developments in Toxic Torts and Environmental Law," *Tort Trial & Insurance Practice Law Journal* (Winter 2017)  
"Recent Developments in Toxic Torts and Environmental Law," *Tort Trial & Insurance Practice Law Journal* (Fall 2013)  
"Defending Product and Service Providers Overseas," *The Network of Trial Law Firms* (June 15, 2012)