

Beltway Moves: Biden Admin, Kramer Levin, Paul Hastings

By **Justin Wise**

Law360 (March 11, 2022, 4:29 PM EST) -- The Washington, D.C., legal sector is attracting more players, with mid-law firm Armstrong Teasdale LLP and litigation power Kramer Levin LLP this month announcing expansions into the nation's capital.

The Biden administration, meanwhile, continues to look to BigLaw attorneys and alums to fill senior positions. The U.S. Department of Justice recently elevated Kevin Chambers, the former co-chair of Latham & Watkins LLP's litigation and trial department, to lead its criminal and civil enforcement efforts to stop pandemic-related fraud.

Firms such as Baker McKenzie and Paul Hastings LLP also have remained active in the recruiting hunt, nabbing attorneys from the [Federal Trade Commission](#) and the DOJ, respectively. And a former Patent Trial and Appeal Board judge made a return to private practice at Arnold & Porter.

Here are the latest moves in the Washington, D.C., legal world.

Kramer Levin, Armstrong Teasdale Add DC footprint

Kramer Levin **made the biggest splash in the D.C. market** in recent weeks, announcing a merger with a boutique that will bring over 24 attorneys, including 11 partners, to its litigation bench. The move, which is due to be finalized in the coming weeks, will establish Kramer Levin's fourth office and bring its attorney headcount to 400.

Kramer Levin leaders told Law360 Pulse that the combination represents a fusion of two heavyweights in commercial litigation. Launched in 2001, Robbins Russell Englert Orseck Untereiner & Sauber LLP specializes in complex business litigation and trials. The firm also has an appellate practice, with its attorneys having argued 45 times before the U.S. Supreme Court, according to its website.

"It represents us basically doubling down on our existing strength in litigation," Kramer Levin co-managing partner Paul Schoeman told Law360 Pulse on Friday. "We refer to litigation as being one of our destination practices. It's a practice that attracts clients from all over the world, and we basically could not find a better group of lawyers to join forces with. They complement us perfectly."

St. Louis-based Armstrong Teasdale **on March 10 also announced** a move into D.C. The expansion came with the hiring of partner Michael K. Lowman, a former Smith Pachter McWhorter PLC partner who earlier in his career worked as a senior counsel at the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission.

Lowman told Law360 Pulse that the firm is hoping to open a D.C. office in the next few months and that the plan is to hire several additional attorneys in the region. The goal is to hit "critical mass," Lowman said.

Biden Administration Appointments, Nominations

President Joe Biden in early March announced he plans to **nominate** Crowell & Moring LLP partner Paul Rosen as the assistant secretary for investment security in the U.S. Department of the Treasury's Office of International Affairs, where Rosen would lead efforts focused on foreign investment and national security risks.

Rosen is a former Obama administration official who joined Crowell in 2017, where he has co-chaired its national security practice in addition to serving in its white collar, cybersecurity and government contracts groups.

Biden also said he plans to nominate Kate Heinzelman, a former Sidley Austin LLP partner in D.C., to be general counsel of the CIA. Heinzelman is currently a chief counselor in the DOJ.

The DOJ also **promoted Chambers**, who left Latham in January 2021 before joining the agency, to director of the COVID-19 Fraud Enforcement unit. The division is tasked with enforcing civil and criminal fraud actions tied to the \$8 billion in pandemic relief the federal government has distributed.

Paul Hastings Bolsters Fintech Group In DC

Paul Hastings in **early March hired** former senior DOJ official Leo Tsao as a partner in its white collar defense and fintech practices, making Tsao the fourth D.C. partner the firm has added to its fintech group since October.

Tsao joins the firm after nearly a decade at the DOJ, where he most recently served as the principal deputy chief of the Money Laundering and Asset Recovery Section. In that role, Tsao focused on areas like cryptocurrency, including helping stand up the department's new National Cryptocurrency Enforcement Team.

"With the standing up of this group, it's just logical to assume there's going to be increased criminal enforcement attention from the DOJ," he told Law360 Pulse on March 7.

The Paul Hastings fintech group has about 65 attorneys, including several lawyers based in the Beltway focused on compliance and the regulatory landscape. The group has added seven lateral attorneys since April 2021, a firm spokesperson said.

Ex-PTAB Judge Joins Arnold & Porter

Jessica Kaiser, a former administrative patent judge at the Patent Trial and Appeal Board, has **returned** to private practice as a partner in Arnold & Porter's Denver office.

She joins the firm after seven years in the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, all of which were spent as a judge at the PTAB. Kaiser will be a member of the firm's intellectual property group.

Other Notable Moves

Baker McKenzie **hired** former FTC litigator Nandu Machiraju as counsel in its antitrust and competition practice.

A pair of BigLaw alums, Michael Kiklis and Kimani Clark, **launched** a patent boutique in the greater D.C. area. Kiklis & Clark PLLC will focus on patent issues centering on software and computer technology, according to the firm.

Shook Hardy & Bacon LLP **hired** former Walmart in-house counsel Veronica Hayes Gromada as a partner in its product liability litigation practice.

Goodwin Procter LLP **hired** former Arnold & Porter litigator Kirk Ogrosky as a partner in its complex litigation and dispute resolution and white collar defense practices. Ogrosky will also co-lead the firm's health care government enforcement and False Claims Act defense group.

Buchanan Ingersoll & Rooney **hired** former Wiley Rein LLP partner Dan Pickard as the chair of its international trade and national security practice.

Cohen & Gresser LLP **added** former Allen & Overy D.C. antitrust practice leader John Roberti as a partner in its antitrust and competition litigation practices.

-- Additional reporting by Jack Rodgers, Lauren Berg, Adam Lidgett and James Mills. Editing by Janice Carter Brown.

All Content © 2003-2022, Portfolio Media, Inc.