ArentFox Schiff LLP
Attorneys

Thomas M. Zurek

COUNSEL

After leading in-house legal departments at two major insurance companies, Tom has significant experience in general litigation and transactional matters and a long track record of success as a trial lawyer.



Practices

Complex Litigation
— Commercial
— Financial Markets Enforcement & Litigation
Insurance & Reinsurance

Education

Drake University Law School, JD, 1973
Drake University, BS, 1970

Offices

Chicago

Phone

312.258.5528

Email

thomas.zurek@afslaw.com

As senior chief legal counsel, executive vice president, and secretary of OneAmerica Financial Group, Tom oversaw a broad range of legal issues, including mergers and acquisition activity, Sarbanes-Oxley compliance, class action defense, ERISA litigation, and general commercial dispute resolution. Over the past 15 years, Tom managed more than 300 lawsuits in federal and state courts across the country, and successfully resolved two nationwide class actions that challenged the company's core business practices. He also led the purchase and sale of numerous businesses and OneAmerica ventures. While serving as president of AULRMS, OneAmerica's reinsurance management subsidiary, Tom was responsible for evaluating all institutional reinsurance risk to OneAmerica and its subsidiary companies.

Previously, Tom was general counsel at American General Life Companies (now AIG), where he was responsible for dispute resolution of all reinsurance and general coverage issues, regulatory and compliance matters, due diligence, and corporate responsibility. Tom, a skilled arbitrator, is among few lawyers in the country focused on life insurance-based arbitration, having rendered verdicts in more than 10 arbitrations primarily in the life insurance industry.

In addition to practicing law at ArentFoxSchiff, Tom also serves as president and CEO of Sargasso Mutual Insurance Company, an offshore D&O company representing the largest mutual financial services companies in the United States.

Client Work

- Revised all articles, by-laws, and governance charters of OneAmerica and reorganized the governance structure of all subsidiary operating companies.
- Advocated with federal legislators' regulatory rules after the passage of Dodd-Frank that impacted the entire holding company and insurance industry at large.
- Crafted 13 nationwide class action settlements dealing with market conduct issues, race-based pricing, and industrial life issues.
- Successfully litigated to dismissal three California Section 17200 private attorney general consumer actions.
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Litigated two nationwide shareholder derivative actions related to American General acquisitions.

- Led American General team that managed more than 1,000 litigation matters including all personal injury and real estate toxic tort matters.

Boards, Memberships & Certifications

- ARIAS, Member (2002-Present)
- Indiana Life and Health Insurance Guaranty Association, Chairman and Member of the Board of Directors (2003-2019)
- American Board of Trial Advocates, Former Member (Iowa and Houston, Tex.)
- Texas Life and Health Guaranty Association, Member (1999-2001)
- Iowa Academy of Trial Lawyers, Former Member
- American Inns of Court, Des Moines, Iowa, Former Master of the Bench
- Polk County Bar Association, Iowa, President and Member of the Board of Directors (1991-1997)
- Certified Arbitrator, ARIAS
- Former chairman and member of the board of education for the Diocese of Des Moines.

Professional Activities

- Polk County Legal Aid, Iowa, Member (1986-1991)
- Drake University Law School, Adjunct Professor (1976-1983)

Publications, Presentations & Recognitions

Presentations:

From 2015-2018, Tom gave multiple presentations on arbitration procedures and life reinsurance to ARIAS, a leading trade association for the insurance and reinsurance industry.

- “Life Industry Arbitrations - The Future of the In-House Lawyer,” ACLI, Compliance & Legal Sections Annual Meeting, Fort Lauderdale, Fla. (Jul. 16, 2019)

Recognitions:

- Barrister of the Year, *The Indiana Lawyer* (2018)

Bar Admissions

Illinois
Indiana

Court Admissions

US Court of Appeals, 8th Circuit
US District Court, Southern District of Iowa