



Labor and Employment Law Program

Offered in conjunction with Cornell Law School

Employer Liability Protection, Workers' Compensation, and a National Fund

June 10, 2020

2:00-3:15

SPEAKER BIOS

John H. Beisner

John Beisner is a partner at Skadden and the leader of its Mass Torts, Insurance and Consumer Litigation Group. He focuses on the defense of purported class actions, mass tort matters and other complex civil litigation in both federal and state courts.

Mr. Beisner regularly handles appellate litigations and has appeared in matters before the U.S. Supreme Court. Over the past 35 years, he has defended major U.S. and international corporations in more than 600 purported class actions filed in federal courts and in 40 state courts at both the trial and appellate levels. Those class actions have involved a wide variety of subjects, including antitrust/unfair competition, consumer fraud, RICO, ERISA, employment discrimination, environmental issues, product-related matters and securities. He also has handled numerous matters before the Judicial Panel on Multidistrict Litigation, as well as proceedings before various federal and state administrative agencies, particularly the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and the Consumer Product Safety Commission.

Mr. Beisner has advised on numerous high-visibility corporate crisis situations, including congressional hearings, federal agency investigations, state attorneys general inquiries and General Accounting Office reviews. Among others, he represented Merck in its Vioxx litigation. He also negotiated a settlement with state attorneys general regarding the Countrywide Finance/Bank of America mortgage lending practices investigation, resulting in a creative loan modification program intended to help more than 400,000 families maintain ownership of their homes. He was named Litigator of the Week by *The American Lawyer* for his role in this case.

Mr. Beisner is a frequent writer and lecturer on class action and complex litigation

issues. In 2013, he received the Burton Award for Legal Achievement, which recognizes excellence in legal scholarship. Mr. Beisner also has been an active participant in litigation reform initiatives before Congress, state legislatures and judicial committees. He has testified numerous times on class action and claims aggregation issues before the U.S. Senate and House Judiciary Committees (particularly with respect to the Class Action Fairness Act of 2005) and before state legislative committees. For his integral role in crafting the Class Action Fairness Act, Mr. Beisner was recognized with the 2011 Research and Policy Award by The U.S. Chamber Institute for Legal Reform.

Joseph W. Canovas

Joseph Canovas is Special Counsel to the New York State AFL-CIO. He works with the Federation's legislative, political, communications and field departments to further pro-worker policy initiatives. He lobbies the executive and legislative branches of New York State government on issues that impact working people. He also provides affiliate support in a wide array of situations including legislative and contract campaigns, work stoppages and grassroots mobilization.

Mr. Canovas is a member of the Board of Governors of the New York Compensation Insurance Rating Board and a former member of the Board of Commissioners of the New York State Insurance Fund. He also served on several NYS Workers' Compensation Board advisory committees.

Mr. Canovas is a graduate of St. John's University School of Law and St. John's University College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. He is admitted to practice law in New York and Connecticut.

Robert R. Snashall

Robert Snashall has 40 years of experience involving workers' compensation insurance matters.

From 1995 to 2003 he served as the Chair of the New York State Workers' Compensation Board. During his tenure, the NYSWCB implemented the 1996 Reform Act; staffed a Fraud Inspector Office; reorganized the agency; and modernized the system with the elimination of paper files and the introduction of the award winning ECase system. Following the September 11 attack on the Twin Towers, he led the NYSWCB response to the thousands of injury and death claims arising out of the attack.

Robert has received a number of awards from the following organizations: International Association of Industrial Accident Boards and Commissions; New York State Business Council; New York State AFL-CIO; New York State Bar Association; New York Compensation Bar Association; New York State Trial Lawyers Association; and, New York Claims Association.

Robert has served on the Boards of the Government Law Center of Albany Law School; the American Society of Workers Compensation Professionals; the Employers Services Assurance Corporation; and, the New York State Academy of Trial Lawyers. He chaired the IAIABC TaskForce for Disaster Preparedness; the Committee on Legislation and Regulations; and, the Associate Member Committee. He also served as the Chair of the Workers' Compensation Certification Institute for the National Association of Professional Employers Organizations.

W. Bradley Wendel

Bradley Wendel joined the Cornell faculty in 2004, after teaching at Washington and Lee Law School from 1999-2004. Before entering graduate school and law teaching, he was a product liability litigator at Bogle & Gates in Seattle and a law clerk for Judge Andrew J. Kleinfeld on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit.

His teaching interests are in the regulation of the legal profession and torts, and his research focuses on the application of moral and political philosophy to problems of legal ethics.

Mr. Wendel received his B.A. from Rice University, his J.D. from Duke University Law School, and his LL.M. and J.S.D. from Columbia University Law School.