

Robert H. Berkes

Partner
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PRACTICE AREAS

Construction
General Liability
Premises Liability
Products Liability
Toxic Tort Liability

EDUCATION

University of California, Hastings College of the Law, JD
University of Southern California, BA, Political Science; Philosophy, *cum laude*

BAR ADMISSIONS

California
US District Court, Central District of California
US District Court, Southern District of California
US Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit

Overview

Robert Berkes has more than 40 years of experience trying civil cases. He has extensive jury trial experience and has handled cases to verdict in such areas as product liability, personal injury, construction accidents, accounting malpractice, commercial fraud, employment disputes, and insurance coverage disputes. He has placed particular emphasis in his practice on the trial of asbestos and toxic exposure cases. He also has extensive experience over the past 20 years in successfully arbitrating over a dozen complex, high-stakes insurance disputes over coverage for asbestos-related claims arising out of the Wellington Agreement (Agreement Concerning Asbestos-Related Claims).

Robert was one of the lead trial counsel in the California Coordinated Asbestos Insurance Coverage Cases, the longest running and largest insurance coverage trial in California litigation history. He was also lead defense counsel in the litigation arising out of the 400 South Hope Street crane accident, one of the most serious accident cases in the history of downtown Los Angeles high-rise construction. As a result of the creative jury trial skills demonstrated in his successful defense of asbestos-related bodily injury cases, Robert was the featured lawyer in the cover article for the Verdicts & Settlement section of the Los Angeles Daily Journal on March 3, 2000.

Robert has been recognized for his accomplishments as one of the top trial lawyers by his membership in the American Board of Trial Advocates. He also has been selected as a fellow by the Litigation Counsel of America based on his excellence in the art of advocacy and his effectiveness and accomplishment in trial and appellate litigation, and his superior ethical reputation. This honorary society of trial lawyers comprises less than one-half of one percent of American lawyers, and selection is by nomination only.

Robert has also been selected to membership in the National Association of Distinguished Counsel (NADC). Membership in this association is only achieved after being thoroughly vetted by a blue ribbon panel of attorneys from independently neutral organizations and approved by a judicial review board as exhibiting virtue in the practice of law. Due to the

selectivity of the appointment process, only the top one percent of attorneys in the United States are awarded NADC membership. This elite class of advocates consists of the finest leaders of the legal profession from across the nation.

Additionally, Robert's accomplishments have been recognized publicly by his inclusion in Chambers USA's Guide to America's Leading Lawyers for Business, by California Magazine's Super Lawyers, and by being selected by his peers for recognition by “Best Lawyers in America.”

Robert is a member of the USC Associates, the leading academic support group for the University of Southern California. He and his sister, Beverly Flournoy, are major contributors to the Ross and Marjorie Berkes Endowed Scholarship Fund, a fund created to provide opportunities for qualified students majoring in the field of International Relations at USC to study abroad. Robert also belongs to the Los Angeles County Bar Association, the Association of Southern California Defense Counsel, and the Defense Research Institute (DRI).

Recognition

+ America's Top 100 Civil Defense Litigators
+ *Thomson Reuters*, Southern California Super Lawyers, 2009, 2012–2016, 2019–2027
+ *Best Lawyers in America*, Insurance Law, 2007–2027

Involvement

+ Associate, American Board of Trial Advocacy
+ Fellow, Litigation Counsel of America
+ National Association of Distinguished Counsel
+ USC Associates
+ Los Angeles County Bar Association
+ Association of Southern California Defense Counsel
+ DRI

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