



Brownstein Launches American Indian Law & Policy Group

Feb 14, 2017

Brownstein is pleased to announce the formation of its American Indian Law & Policy Group. This group brings unparalleled experience dealing with tribal issues before Congress, the U.S. Department of the Interior and other federal and state agencies. Washington, D.C., Shareholder Ryan Smith will serve as chair of the group.

“With the new administration and Congress, there will be a significant amount of change that will impact Indian tribes, which will take the form of new regulations, legislation and policies,” said Ryan Smith, chair of the American Indian Law & Policy Group at Brownstein. “Because Brownstein has attorneys and lobbyists who have worked on tribal issues in senior positions in Congress, in a Republican administration, in state government and as in-house tribal counsel, we are extremely well situated to help clients navigate this new legal, legislative and political landscape.”

The American Indian Law & Policy Group represents tribes and their business partners throughout the U.S. and is made up of experienced attorneys and lobbyists with extensive knowledge of the unique laws and issues facing Indian Country.

Shareholder **Ryan Smith** (Washington, D.C.) represents tribes throughout the country before Congress, the administration and the courts. Prior to joining Brownstein, Smith served as a senior policy advisor to former Senate Minority Whip Jon Kyl (R-AZ) and deputy counsel for the Arizona Department of Water Resources. While in Congress and private practice, Smith has been instrumental in the development of federal legislation relating to Indian tribes and western natural resources, including several Indian water settlements.

Shareholder **Larry Jensen** (Washington, D.C.) served for 18 years in top legal and policy positions at the U.S. Department of the Interior and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Jensen served as the chief legal counsel to the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and served for three years as the deputy solicitor in the George W. Bush administration, with responsibility for overseeing the work of 250 departmental attorneys. He was also lead counsel for Interior in the largest class action ever brought against the federal government, which involved the management of Indian trust monies.

Shareholder **Hal Stratton** (New Mexico) has spent more than three decades navigating government—as the head of a federal agency, as the attorney general for the state of New Mexico and for four terms in the New Mexico House of Representatives. Stratton has also represented Indian tribes before the Department of the Interior regarding their IGRA gaming compacts, tribal recognition issues and other tribal matters. Stratton is a registered member of the Cherokee Nation.

Shareholder **Jennifer Carleton** (Nevada) has developed a unique multijurisdictional practice, representing developers and other business entities in their Indian Country project initiatives. She has participated in compact and intergovernmental negotiations in a number of states, and has advised tribes and their business partners on large-scale development projects. Carleton has spent her entire career in Indian Country, serving as in-house counsel for an Indian tribe in Wisconsin for 10 years and for the last decade as an advisor to tribes, developers and lenders. Carleton was named a 2017 *Best Lawyer* and has been recognized by *Chambers* since 2015 as a ranked gaming and licensing professional. In 2016, she was one of *Vegas Inc.*'s Women to Watch and she was named one of the 2012 Ten Women Who Mean Business by the *Las Vegas Business Press*.

Meet The Team

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