DeWitt LLP Law Firm



Jon P. Axelrod

Partner

Madison, Wisconsin

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Service Areas:

- Appellate
- Insurance Coverage
- Litigation
- Transportation & Logistics

Education:

- J.D., *with honors,* University of Wisconsin Law School (1968)
- B.S., Cornell University (1965)
- Fellowship in litigation at the University of Pennsylvania Law School in Philadelphia (1968-1970)

Admissions:

- Wisconsin
- U.S. Court of Appeals for the 7th Circuit
- U.S. District Court for the Western District of Wisconsin
- U.S. Supreme Court

Jon is a partner at DeWitt located in the firm's Madison office, where he has practiced civil litigation since 1974. In 1995, Jon was appointed by the Wisconsin Supreme Court to the Board of Attorneys Professional Responsibility (“BAPR”), the predecessor to the Office of Lawyer Regulation (“OLR”), and served through 2000. Jon also served on the Bench Bar Committee of the State Bar from 1991-1996.

He has served as a Board member of the University of Wisconsin law School Friends of the Remington Center Endowment, which funds criminal justice programs at the UW Law School. In addition, Jon has been active in Combat Blindness International, and has served on the Development Committee.

Jon is a well-respected litigator with an impressive record. Some of his cases have resulted in landmark decisions in Wisconsin and federal appellate courts, including the United States Supreme Court.

His clients include corporations, non-profits, governmental entities, and individuals. Jon has also represented many individuals pro bono. He has been an equity partner at DeWitt since 1974. Jon also served as a part-time faculty member at the University of Wisconsin-Madison Law School and was once a staff attorney with the Public Defender Service for the District of Columbia.

Affiliations

- Board Member – University of Wisconsin Law School Friends of the Remington Center Endowment

Awards & Recognitions

- Martindale-Hubbell® AV rated for 30+ years
- Fellow of the Wisconsin Law Foundation
- Best Lawyers in America® – Commercial Litigation – Since 1997
- Super Lawyers® in Wisconsin – Business Litigation – 2005-2006, 2010-2019
- "Top Lawyer" – Madison Magazine

Notable Representations

- Raymond Motor Transportation, Inc. v. Rice, 434 U.S. 429, 98 S.Ct. 787, 54 L.Ed.2d 664 (1978) (Wisconsin's ban on double-bottom tractor semitrailers held unconstitutional by the United States Supreme Court under Commerce Clause of United States Constitution. Represented major motor carriers)
- Liebovich v. Minnesota Ins. Co., 2008 WI 75, 310 Wis. 2d 751, 751 N.W.2d 764 (Established insurance coverage under an AIG Private Client Group policy for non-accidental offenses, including breach of real estate restrictive covenant. Represented lake property owner in coverage disputes with AIG)
- Wisconsin State AFL-CIO v. Elections Board, 543 F. Supp. 630 (E.D. Wis. 1982) (Wisconsin's legislative districts held unconstitutional under one-person/one-vote principle of the United States Constitution. The Court established new district lines to provide equal representation. Represented Wisconsin legislative leaders)
- State v. Wisconsin Central Transportation Corp., 200 Wis. 2d 450, 546 N.W.2d 206 (Ct. App. 1996), aff'd, 209 Wis. 2d 278, 562 N.W.2d 152 (1997) (Wisconsin's "conductor law" held unconstitutional as preempted by federal law. Represented Wisconsin Central Railroad and its holding company)
- State v. Beno, 116 Wis. 2d 122, 341 N.W.2d 668 (1984) (Legislative leader held to have immunity under the Wisconsin Constitution against civil subpoena requesting confidential information provided by constituent. Represented Speaker of Wisconsin Assembly)
- Wisconsin Hospital Ass'n v. Reivitz, 820 F.2d 863 (7th Cir. 1987) (Wisconsin Medicaid freeze held under Supremacy Clause of United States Constitution. Represented Wisconsin Hospital Association)
- Aetna Life Ins. Co. v. Mitchell, 101 Wis. 2d 90, 303 N.W.2d 639 (1981) (Wisconsin life insurance cost disclosure administrative rules declared invalid. Represented major life insurers)
- Robert Hansen Trucking, Inc. v. LIRC, 126 Wis. 2d 323, 377 N.W.2d 151 (1985) (Motor carriers held not liable for unemployment compensation taxes on owner-operators. Represented Wisconsin Motor Carriers Association)
- Professional Office Buildings, Inc. v. Royal Indemnity Co., 145 Wis. 2d 573, 427 N.W.2d 427 (Ct. App. 1988) (Insurer held liable for multi-million dollar air crash judgment. Represented air crash victim and his employer)
- Albedyll v. Wisconsin Porcelain Co. Revised Retirement Plan, 947 F.2d 246 (7th Cir. 1991) (Obtained 5.2 million judgment affirmed against ERISA pension plan. Represented employees of Wisconsin Porcelain Company including management employees)
- Wisconsin Housing & Economic Development Authority v. Verex Assurance, Inc., 166 Wis. 2d 636, 480 N.W.2d 490 (1992) (Insurer prohibited from rescinding mortgage insurance policies. Represented Wisconsin Housing & Economic Development Authority)
- Thompson v. Craney, 199 Wis. 2d 674, 546 N.W.2d 123 (1996) (Wisconsin statute eliminating powers of Superintendent of Public Instruction held unconstitutional. Represented Governor of State of Wisconsin)
- Gorton v. Hostak, Henz & Bichler, S.C., 217 Wis. 2d 493, 577 N.W.2d 617 (1998) (Established standards for determining when court-ordered attorneys' fees are to be divided between attorney and client)
- State v. Williams, 2012 WI 59, 341 Wis. 2d 191, 814 N.W.2d 460 (2012) (Represented the Wisconsin Association of Judicial Court Commissioners and the Wisconsin Family Court Commissioners' Association in establishing that court commissioners may constitutionally issue search warrants and exercise other judicial powers)
- Kelley Supply, Inc. v. Chr. Hansen, Inc., No. 2011AP433, 2012 WL 612802 (Ct. App. Feb. 28, 2012)(unpublished) (Court of Appeals affirmed trial court that Kelley Supply, Inc. was a "dealer" under the Wisconsin Fair Dealership Law that its dealership had been unlawfully terminated)
- Felland v. Clifton, 582 F. 3d 665 (7th Cir. 2012) (Court held that emails and telephone calls from Arizona to Wisconsin resulted in Wisconsin courts having personal jurisdiction over the Arizona defendants. After extensive additional proceedings on remand, final judgment was entered by the District Court on April 1, 2014)

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Service Area Subspecialties

- Litigation
  - Appeals in State & Federal Court
  - Professional Ethics/Discipline
  - Trials in State & Federal Courts