

CONTACT

rgs@vnf.com
202.298.1920

PRACTICES

Renewable Energy

EDUCATION

Louisiana State University Law
School
Louisiana State University

BAR AND COURT ADMISSIONS

District of Columbia Bar
Louisiana State Bar
U.S. Supreme Court

ROBERT G. SZABO

SENIOR COUNSEL



Professional Background

Bob came from Louisiana to Washington, DC in 1975 to serve as Senior Legislative Assistant to Senator J. Bennett Johnston (D-LA). Bob has focused his career on counseling, advocating for, and resolving federal policy issues for clients on issues in the areas of energy, the environment, natural resources, and transportation. He has extensive experience working with both Congress and the Executive Branch of the federal government.

While a member of Senator Johnston's staff, Bob worked on issues before the Senate Interior and Insular Affairs Committee and, later, its successor committee, the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee. During the first two years of the Carter Administration, Bob worked almost exclusively on President Carter's proposed national energy plan legislation, which consumed both Congress and the Administration during that period of time. Many of the energy issues that continue to be considered and debated by the federal government today were first debated in the Carter national energy plan.

Representative Experience

Since joining the firm as a partner in 1978, Bob has represented a wide range of clients on a variety of federal issues, including but not limited to the following:

- Representing a major independent oil and gas producer with regard to issues arising in foreign nations from which the producer holds oil and gas leases;
- Assisting federal outer continental shelf (OCS) oil and gas lessees to obtain the right to retain their leases;
- Representing a state with respect to both its claims for a share of federal OCS revenues through Section 8(g) of the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act and for other portions of OCS revenue;
- Assisting a major hydroelectric project owned by two states to remove the legal impediments to the project's operation due to the presence of federal property in the project;
- Representing a cellulosic ethanol producer in its successful effort to develop one of the nation's first cellulosic ethanol demonstration facilities;
- Representing a coalition of groups with regard to the operation of the Section 404 permitting program of the Clean Water Act and also with regard to the definition of "waters of the United States";
- Representing a large coalition of customers dependent on freight railroads for their transportation in an effort to improve their ability to negotiate acceptable commercial transportation arrangements;
- Representing a large national coalition of interests in their efforts to improve the Endangered Species Act; and
- Representing a national trade association of energy service companies with respect to the application of a provision of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act and the federal tax benefit provided for energy-efficient buildings.

Government Service

Office of U.S. Senator J. Bennett Johnston (D-LA)

Senior Legislative Assistant, 1975-1978

Supreme Court of Louisiana

Law Clerk for the Honorable Justice John A. Dixon, Jr., 1972-1973

Awards and Honors

Chambers USA

Transportation: Rail (for Shippers) 2013-2016

"Best Lawyers in America" by *Best Lawyers*

Government Relations Law, 2008-2023

Legal 500 - Recommended Attorney

Government Relations, 2019-2020

"Lawyer of the Year" by *Best Lawyers*

Government Relations, 2020

Articles and Presentations

- Expedited Permitting to Save the Louisiana Coast: A Case Study, Municipal Water Leader, Vol. 4 Issue 4 pp. 18-23, 06/29/2018
- National Water Resources Association, Denver CO, 11/04/2015
- NCTA Annual Conference 2007, Denver CO, 09/12/2007
- A Five Point Plan for Expanding the Nation's Wetlands Base and Improving the Section 404 Program, Stone, Sand & Gravel Review, pp. 18, 05/01/2002

Alerts

- Proposed Rule Redefining Jurisdictional "Waters of the United States" Under the Clean Water Act – Comment Period Closes, but Questions Remain Open, 11/17/2014
- President Reaffirms Support for "All-of-the-Above" Energy Policy, Announces Initiative to Streamline Energy Infrastructure Permitting, 01/30/2014
- OUTLOOK 2014: KEY POLICY DEVELOPMENTS, 01/23/2014
- Government Shut-down: Update #6: The Government Opens and Debt Default Is Avoided, 10/17/2013
- Federal Agencies to Implement Contingency Plans Following Government Shut-down: Update #5, 10/15/2013
- Federal Agencies to Implement Contingency Plans Following Government Shut-down: Update #4, 10/13/2013
- Federal Agencies to Implement Contingency Plans Following Government Shut-down: Update #3, 10/08/2013
- Federal Agencies to Implement Contingency Plans Following Government Shutdown, 10/01/2013