



Robert C. O'Brien

Partner

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Education

University of California, Berkeley School of Law
University of California, Los Angeles, B.A., cum laude

Admissions

California
The Supreme Court of the United States
U.S. Court of Appeals, Ninth Circuit
U.S.D.C. Central District California
U.S.D.C. Eastern District California
U.S.D.C. Northern District California
U.S.D.C. Southern District California

Robert C. O'Brien is a co-founder of Larson O'Brien LLP. He is an accomplished trial lawyer, having served as lead trial and appellate counsel in high-profile complex commercial litigation matters and international arbitrations. The Daily Journal has recognized Mr. O'Brien as one of the Top 100 lawyers in California and Lawdragon has named him one of the 500 Leading Lawyers in America. In addition to maintaining a robust litigation practice, he is currently the Special Presidential Envoy for Hostage Affairs. In that capacity, he coordinates the United States Government's diplomatic engagements on overseas hostage-related matters.

Mr. O'Brien's litigation practice focuses on complex commercial litigation in state and federal courts and domestic and international arbitrations, in class action, entertainment, intellectual property, environmental, business torts, and contractual matters. He represents individuals and companies in the entertainment, oil and gas, technology, finance and real estate industries.

Mr. O'Brien is frequently appointed by federal and state courts to serve as a Special Master and discovery referee. He served in these capacities in several of the largest recent cases in the Central District of California, including MGA v. Mattel ("Barbie v. Bratz"), United States v. Standard & Poors and In re Allergan Securities Litigation. Mr. O'Brien has also been appointed as an arbitrator in over two dozen domestic and international cases.

Prior Experience

Prior to establishing Larson O'Brien LLP, Mr. O'Brien was the California managing partner of a national AMLAW 125 firm for nearly a decade. As California managing partner, he grew the California offices from 10 lawyers to more than 110 lawyers in seven years. He previously was the managing partner of a litigation boutique and practiced at Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher, & Flom LLP.

Prior to serving as the President's hostage envoy, Mr. O'Brien has held senior roles in the federal government. He was the U.S. Alternate Representative to the 60th session of the United Nations General Assembly, which met in New York from 2005 through 2006. In 2008, Mr. O'Brien was appointed by President George W. Bush to serve a three-year term on the Cultural Property Advisory Committee, which advises the U.S. Government on the Convention on the Cultural Property Implementation Act. He was the founding Co-Chairman of the Department of State Public-Private Partnership for Justice Reform in Afghanistan from 2007 to 2011, and served under both Condoleezza Rice and Hillary Rodham Clinton.

Mr. O'Brien was a senior legal officer at the UN Security Council (UNCC) in Geneva, Switzerland, from 1996 to 1998, where he handled government claims against Iraq arising out of the first Gulf War. He was a Major in the US Army Reserve JAG Corps.

Mr. O'Brien was a member of the Dean's Advisory Board of the Fowler School of Law at Chapman University. He was also a member of the International Republican Institute (IRI) delegations that observed the presidential election in the Republic of Georgia in October 2013 and the parliamentary election in Ukraine in October 2014. Mr. O'Brien was a Pacific Council on International Policy observer of the 9/11 Military Commission pre-trial proceedings in Guantanamo Bay.

Mr. O'Brien served as a senior foreign policy advisor to three presidential campaigns. His articles on international law, the right of publicity, and civil procedure have been published in leading law reviews and journals. His essays and editorials on foreign policy and national security regularly appear in national publications. In 2016, he authored *While America Slept: Restoring American Leadership to a World in Crisis*. Since 2016, the Los Angeles Business Journal named Mr. O'Brien one of the 500 most influential people in Los Angeles.

Mr. O'Brien received his law degree from the University of California, Berkeley School of Law (Boalt Hall) and graduated, cum laude, from UCLA with a degree in political science.

Representative Matters

- Since founding Larson O'Brien, Mr. O'Brien has served as lead trial and appellate counsel, defending class action lawsuits alleging unfair business practices, American Disabilities Act (ADA) and Proposition 65 claims for corporate clients including F. Korbel & Brothers, IBM subsidiary, Seterus, and Hobby Lobby.
- Representing an independent oil company in an environmental dispute, Mr. O'Brien obtained more than \$1 million sanctions orders against the State of California for the destruction of documents relevant to his client's defense of the case.
- Mr. O'Brien obtained an eight-figure arbitration award for a client in a contract dispute proceeding.
- In 2017, Mr. O'Brien led internal investigations for a government pension fund, a publicly-traded company and a major Hollywood professional association.
- Mr. O'Brien has been lead trial counsel, defending Fortune 500 companies in labor and employment disputes including gender discrimination, sexual harassment, and retaliation claims. In 2017, he settled an alleged \$100 million employment dispute during jury selection. He has also represented corporations and executives in trade secret and employee raiding cases, in the finance, real estate and entertainment industries.
- Throughout his career, Mr. O'Brien has successfully tried high profile entertainment cases involving intellectual property and contract rights through jury verdict and arbitration award for major studios including HBO and 20th Century Fox.
- Mr. O'Brien has represented A-list celebrities, producers, and national figures, including astronaut Buzz Aldrin and the estates of astronauts Pete Conrad and Jim Irwin, in right of publicity, privacy, and defamation disputes, to protect his clients' reputations and intellectual property rights.