

# MICHIGAN

## Local litigation firms

### Highly recommended

Bodman

Dickinson Wright

Dykema Gossett

Honigman Miller Schwartz and Cohn

Miller Canfield Paddock and Stone

### Recommended

Barris Sott Denn & Driker

Butzel Long

Miller Johnson

Smith Haughey Rice & Roegge

Warner Norcross & Judd

Young & Susser

## Local litigation stars

### Stephen Afendoulis

Varnum Riddering Schmidt & Howlett  
Complex Commercial Litigation, Intellectual Property, Personal Injury

### Norman Ankers

Honigman Miller Schwartz and Cohn  
Complex Commercial Litigation

### Joseph Aviv

Honigman Miller Schwartz and Cohn  
Complex Commercial Litigation

### Charles "Chip" Behler

Smith Haughey Rice & Roegge  
Commercial Litigation

### Mark Bickel

Smith Haughey Rice & Roegge  
Insurance

### Lawrence Campbell

Dickinson Wright  
Commercial Litigation, Employment Litigation

### Michael Cooney

Dykema Gossett  
Commercial Litigation, Intellectual Property, Products Liability

### Thomas Cranmer

Miller Canfield Paddock and Stone  
Complex Commercial Litigation, White Collar Crime

### Eugene Driker

Barris Sott Denn & Driker  
Complex Commercial Litigation

### Dennis Haffey

Dykema Gossett  
Commercial Litigation, Employment Litigation

### Michael Hartmann

Miller Canfield Paddock and Stone  
Commercial Litigation

### Raymond Henney

Honigman Miller Schwartz and Cohn  
Commercial Litigation, Securities

### Patrick Hickey

Dykema Gossett  
Commercial Litigation

### William Holmes

Warner Norcross & Judd  
Commercial Litigation, Securities

### Peter Kellett

Dykema Gossett  
Commercial Litigation, Intellectual Property, Products Liability

### George Kemsley

Bodman  
Appellate, Commercial Litigation, Professional Liability

### Philip Kessler

Butzel Long  
Commercial Litigation

### Robert Krause

Dickinson Wright  
Personal Injury, Products Liability

### Edward Kronk

Butzel Long  
Products Liability

### Kathleen Lang

Dickinson Wright  
Commercial Litigation, Insurance, Intellectual Property, Products Liability

### Dennis Levasseur

Bodman  
Commercial Litigation, Intellectual Property, Securities

### Todd Millar

Smith Haughey Rice & Roegge  
Commercial Litigation, Insurance

### Jon Muth

Miller Johnson  
Commercial Litigation, Products Liability

### John "Jack" Oostema

Smith Haughey Rice & Roegge  
Insurance

### Edward Pappas

Dickinson Wright  
Complex Commercial Litigation

### Clarence Pozza

Miller Canfield Paddock and Stone  
Commercial Litigation, Securities

### Richard Rassel

Butzel Long  
Commercial Litigation

### William Sankbeil

Kerr, Russel & Weber  
Antitrust, Commercial Litigation

### Joseph Shannon

Bodman  
Commercial Litigation

### Mark Stern

Honigman Miller Schwartz and Cohn  
Complex Commercial Litigation, Intellectual Property, Products Liability, Securities

### Thomas Tallerico

Bodman  
Antitrust, Commercial Litigation

**Douglas Wagner**

Warner Norcross & Judd  
Products Liability

**I.W. Winsten**

Honigman Miller Schwartz and Cohn  
Commercial Litigation

**Sharon Woods**

Barris Sott Denn & Driker  
Complex Commercial Litigation, Employment  
Litigation, Intellectual Property, Securities

**Carl von Ende**

Miller Canfield Paddock and Stone  
Antitrust, Intellectual Property, Securities

**Richard Zuckerman**

Honigman Miller Schwartz and Cohn  
Commercial Litigation, Intellectual Property,  
Securities, White Collar Crime

Future stars

Michelle Alamo  
Dickinson Wright

Laura Baucus  
Dykema Gossett

Thomas Bruetsch  
Bodman

Charlotte Carne  
Butzel Long

Geoffrey Fields  
Dickinson Wright

Alan Harris  
Bodman

Michael Hindelang  
Honigman Miller Schwartz and Cohn

Kevin Kalczynski  
Barris Sott Denn & Driker

William Kohler  
Butzel Long

Brett Rendeiro  
Varnum Riddering Schmidt & Howlett

Steven Susser  
Young & Susser

Rodger Young  
Young & Susser



# Michigan

**The grim conditions surrounding Michigan's manufacturing industry have made headlines over the last year. The fall of the "big three" automakers, with two of the three filing for bankruptcy, and the dire unemployment data (Michigan has the highest unemployment rate in the nation), have cast doubts on the likelihood of a swift recovery. Despite, and indeed perhaps because of this turmoil, the litigation market in Michigan is as healthy as ever.**

## Highly recommended firms

### Bodman

With nearly 140 attorneys in offices in Detroit, Troy, Ann Arbor, Cheboygan and Lansing, Bodman provides a wide range of general commercial, intellectual property, securities and bankruptcy litigation services to its growing list of clients statewide. To a lesser extent, the firm also provides litigation services related to environmental law and railroad law.

Within the firm, **Robert Brower** deals primarily with litigation involving financial institutions, occasionally handling employment litigation and bankruptcy cases. He recently represented the Detroit Lions in a dispute involving cost overruns in the construction of Ford Field, in which a subcontractor was demanding \$53 million. The Lions then countersued for \$9.4 million, and eventually the case was settled for approximately \$11 million. Peers say **Dennis**

Peers rate **Kathleen Lang** as a "strong litigator" in the fields of intellectual property and products liability. One client enthuses "she does an outstanding job and is very practical." She currently counsels Ford Motor Company in pending litigation against an exclusive supplier to Ford in which Ford's total claimed damages exceed \$5 billion. Competitors also recognize **Robert Krause** for his commercial litigation practice. He has represented Eli Lilly & Company and currently represents W.R. Grace & Co. in an asbestos case involving claims of personal injury and property damage. **Edward Pappas** is also mentioned as a "great litigator with incredible judgment" for his trial, appellate and arbitration experience.

### Dykema Gossett

Detroit-based **Dykema Gossett** makes its debut as a highly recommended firm in this year's rankings. Clients describe them as "an outstanding 'A-team' group of litigation

ethical, with tremendous courtroom presence."

### Honigman Miller Schwartz and Cohn

Honigman Miller Schwartz and Cohn maintains an international practice while remaining a quintessential Michigan firm. Headquartered in Detroit, the firm has 230 attorneys throughout its offices in Lansing, Oakland County, Ann Arbor and Kalamazoo. One peer notes that "they are clearly excellent and have a lot of lawyers who are capable of attending to specialties and niches, more so than many other firms."

**Norman Ankers**, renowned by peers as "a great 'bet-the-company' attorney," maintains a complex commercial litigation practice. He obtained a 2008 arbitration award of nearly \$2 million in favor of a client arising out of a failure to sell its business for the best possible price being dictated by local market trends. **Robert Jackson** focuses on class action defense work, routinely handling health care and products liability matters nationwide. Peers call **John Pirich** "just a workhorse" for his ability to negotiate insurance coverage disputes, environmental permitting, compliance and administrative requirements. **Joseph Aviv** focuses on complex corporate, securities, and class action litigation. Competitors call him "one to watch for." **I.W. Winsten** recently obtained \$33 million from an Indian tribe for breach of an agreement to share the tribe's settlement from a prior lawsuit challenging Detroit casino licenses.

### Miller Canfield Paddock and Stone

Formed in 1852, Miller Canfield Paddock and Stone ranks as one of the oldest firms in the state. It is also one of Michigan's most comprehensive firms, with offices in seven key markets within the state, as well as offices in New York, China and several in Poland. "They are an excellent firm with some top-quality people," observes one competitor. The firm made news in June 2009 when, acting as co-counsel, it achieved a victory for Valassis, a media and marketing services company, in Valassis' unfair competition suit against a division of News Corp. The jury awarded \$300 million to Valassis for compensatory damages. The two lead litigators on this case, **Michael Palizzi** and **Gregory Curtner**, received recognition from peers even before the court's decision on this case.

Peers call **Thomas Cranmer** "tremendous, one of the top five lawyers in the state." Cranmer concentrates his practice on both high-stakes criminal and civil litigation. Firm CEO **Michael Hartmann** is also recognized for his substantial commercial litigation practice.

## Recommended firms

### Barris Sott Denn & Driker

Competitors laud Detroit boutique Barris

**"[Honigman Miller Schwartz and Cohn is] clearly excellent and [the firm has] a lot of lawyers who are capable of attending to specialties and niches, more so than many other firms.'"**

**Levasseur** does excellent work representing banks and brokerage firms in securities matters. Recent clients include Fannie Mae and the city of Grosse Pointe Park. **Thomas Tallerico**, called "a market force" by peers, represents clients in complex commercial litigation, professional liability, securities, and antitrust matters. **Joseph Shannon** receives peer praise for his commercial practice with an emphasis on construction.

### Dickinson Wright

Founded in 1878 in Detroit, Dickinson Wright has grown to be one of the largest firms in the region. With more than 260 attorneys across offices in Detroit, Bloomfield Hills, Lansing, Grand Rapids, Ann Arbor, Washington, D.C., Toronto, Phoenix and Nashville, the firm provides comprehensive legal services to a broad range of clients, but has deep ties to Detroit's auto manufacturer and supplier communities. Competitors refer to them as "a superb law firm, one of the state's best."

attorneys." The firm has grown to include 450 lawyers and offices in Chicago, Dallas, Los Angeles, Washington, D.C. and Detroit. In June 2009, the firm won a defense verdict for Ford Motor Company in a products liability action in which the plaintiffs alleged that a defect in a Ford Explorer caused a fire after the vehicle struck a tree at high speed. Ford and Dykema countered, arguing that the Explorer is safe, no vehicle can eliminate all potential hazards and no vehicle is designed to perform in accidents as severe as the one at issue.

Clients call **James Feeney** "a superstar lawyer, one of the best in the country" for his work in high-stakes litigation, particularly with regards to automotive cases. Peers mention **Dennis Haffey** for his work in complex business litigation on behalf both plaintiffs and defendants at the trial and appellate level. **Peter Kellett** focuses on class actions, products liability, intellectual property, commercial litigation and mass torts. Peers refer to **Patrick Hickey** as "very

Sott Denn & Driker as being “an extremely ethical, high-quality bunch.” Within the firm, peer review particularly highlights **Eugene Driker**, who is called “the dean of trial lawyers in the state,” and “like a broker to the stars,” by separate competitors. He specializes in complex business litigation, and he has served as lead or co-lead trial counsel in numerous cases; he defended one of the state’s largest utilities in a \$500 million fraud and breach of contract action brought by a major industrial firm. Peers call **Sharon Woods** “top-flight, one of the top ten in the state, and definitely one of best commercial litigators around.”

#### **Butzel Long**

With offices in Detroit, Ann Arbor, Bloomfield Hills and Lansing, Butzel Long has, as of April of 2009, expanded its presence into Washington D.C., Florida and New York through a merger with Tighe Patton. The firm has more than 240 attorneys in a wide variety of industries and practice areas. Several peers mention **Edward Kronk**, who devotes his practice principally to litigation with emphasis on product liability defense and commercial litigation.

#### **Miller Johnson**

Western Michigan-based Miller Johnson employs more than 90 attorneys in Grand Rapids and Kalamazoo. The firm has a loyal

client base, which includes small, medium and large companies, public and privately held entities, and family owned businesses, in West Michigan and beyond. Senior partner **Jon Muth** practices professional liability and environmental and energy litigation. **Aileen Lepprandt** is tipped as a future star for her work in construction and real estate litigation.

#### **Smith Haughey Rice & Roegge**

A new entry into the Michigan rankings, Smith Haughey Rice & Roegge provides services in both the east and west of the state, with offices in Grand Rapids, Ann Arbor and Traverse City. Within the firm, **Charles “Chip” Behler** maintains a statewide practice in Michigan, principally in the areas of construction law, governmental law, and commercial litigation. **John “Jack” Oostema** is considered to “have the world by the tail” for his professional liability practice. Peers call insurance and products liability litigator **Mark Bickel** “one of the best litigators I’ve watched, and I’ve learned a lot from him.”

#### **Warner Norcross & Judd**

With six locations in key markets throughout the state, the firm of Warner Norcross & Judd offers a comprehensive array of litigation services. **William Holmes** practices in the areas of business and commercial litigation, including banking, securities,

environmental, corporate-control litigation and class action defense. Recent clients include Macatawa Bank and Chicago Title Insurance Company. **Douglas Wagner** is noted for his work in product liability defense and insurance coverage disputes for clients, including Monsanto. In 2009, the firm took on former Varnum Riddering litigator **Richard “Dick” Kay**, who several peers call “a big gun.”

#### **Young & Susser**

A new entry into the Michigan rankings, Young & Susser is mentioned by several lawyers in the community as a “firm to watch; whether you love them or hate them, they are getting noticed.” The firm, located in Southfield, was founded in 1991 by **Rodger Young** who competitors acknowledge as a “really good trial lawyer, a leader and a formidable opponent.” **Steven Susser** has tried numerous commercial cases and has argued before the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals and the Federal Circuit Court of Appeals.

#### **William Sankbeil at Kerr, Russel & Weber**

William Sankbeil is the co-chairperson of the Litigation Practice Group at Detroit firm Kerr, Russel & Weber. Sankbeil practices complex commercial litigation, and antitrust and trade regulation. Peers in the community commend his skills, with separate sources describing him as “top-flight” and “superb.”



## STEVE AFENDOULIS



## VARNUM LLP

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Steve Afendoulis is a partner and served as chairman of Varnum's trial practice group for more than a decade. He is a trial and appellate advocate with a focus in the areas of complex commercial, personal injury, real estate, trademark and unfair competition litigation.

Unlike many trial lawyers, Steve also serves as a trusted advisor and client relationship manager for a number of Varnum's corporate clients. Additionally, he has a unique legal focus in motorsports and serves as chair of Varnum's Sports and Entertainment Group

Steve received his law degree from the University of Toledo School of Law, graduating *magna cum laude* and valedictorian of his class. He served the US Court of Appeals, Sixth Circuit, clerking for Honorable Anthony J. Celebrezze, whom he recalls with great affection. Following his clerkship, he joined Varnum in 1984 and this past year celebrated both his 25th wedding anniversary and 25th year with the firm.

Steve is AV-rated (the highest rating possible) by Martindale Hubbell, and has been listed in *The Best Lawyers in America*® for the past several years. When not practicing law, Steve is active in his church, enjoys motorsports, hockey, football and most every other sport. A die-hard Detroit Lions fan, Steve has (for the 25th year in a row) predicted that this will be the year the Lions make the playoffs. His track record in the courtroom stands in sharp contrast to his NFL playoff predicting ability.

## KEVIN KALCZYNSKI



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Kevin joined Barris, Sott, Denn & Draker, PLLC in November, 2000 and became a partner in January, 2007. He represents clients in business tort and breach of contract matters. He has litigated director and officer liability claims, supply-chain disputes, trade secrets, lease disputes, non-compete agreements, lender liability, professional liability and construction claims. Kevin has significant courtroom experience. He has first-chair trial experience in federal court and has successfully argued matters in the Michigan Court of Appeals. He strongly believes in representing clients ethically and efficiently. He has presented to in-house counsel on both ethics issues and on how companies can save costs when employing outside lawyers. In 2009 and 2010, Kevin was recognized as a "Future Star" by *Benchmark Litigation*, the definitive guide to business litigation law firms and attorneys. Active in the community, Kevin is now a member of the State Bar of Michigan Judicial and Professional Ethics Committee and is the chairperson of the Royal Oak Downtown Development Authority. He is also the past president of the St Aloysius Parish Council in Detroit. Kevin's representative experience is listed below:

- Represented one of Canada's largest law firms in a 15-day evidentiary hearing in federal court where plaintiffs sought to enjoin the firm from representing a Canadian municipality against a \$1.5 billion infrastructure project based on an alleged conflict of interest. At the conclusion of the hearing, the court denied plaintiffs' motion for a preliminary injunction.
- Key member of trial team in an arbitration involving the construction of a power plant. At the conclusion of the 72-day hearing, our client was awarded over \$25.5 million.
- Represented directors and officers of an auto supplier in an adversary proceeding in bankruptcy court. Immediately filed dispositive motions and then settled the case for a fraction of the policy limit while the motions were pending.
- Represented one of Michigan's largest land developers in a case arising from alleged fraud related to land contract. Drafted and successfully argued summary disposition motion on behalf of our client.
- Represented one of Michigan's largest insurers in arbitration against a third-party administrator. Drafted and successfully argued motion to dismiss the TPA's primary breach of contract claim valued at \$3.4 million.
- Represented landlord in a case brought by an international corporation. Drafted and successfully argued summary disposition motion on behalf of our client and then collected client's attorney fees and costs under fee provision in lease.
- Represented major OEM in breach of warranty action. Drafted and successfully argued summary disposition and subsequent appeal on behalf of our client.
- Represented major automotive OEM in potential criminal RICO/antitrust matter. Drafted and filed civil complaint and then negotiated six-figure settlement before discovery commenced.