

JOHN RATNASWAMY

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John Ratnaswamy founded his own law firm after having served as a co-founder and Partner at a nationally recognized energy boutique law firm. John has spent more than two decades counseling and representing electric and natural gas industry clients, including before utility commissions and on appeal. John has been selected for inclusion in The Best Lawyers in America® from 2010-2024 and was named its 2014 Chicago “Lawyer of the Year” in the field of Energy Law. John also has been recognized in Chambers USA from 2007-2018, the Leading Lawyers Network from 2012-2022, and by Super Lawyers® from 2010-2024 as an Illinois lawyer in the field of energy and natural resources law.*

John also has over 20 years of experience in counseling, teaching, and writing on lawyer professional responsibility and ethics matters. He also is a former member of the Hearing Board of the Illinois Attorney Registration and Disciplinary Commission.

In addition, John served as the American Bar Association Advisor to the Uniform Law Commission’s Drafting Committee on a Tort Law Relating to Drones. John also served as the Vice Chair, and as the Editor in Chief of the Newsletter, of the Space Law Committee of the ABA Section of Science and Technology Law.

Professional Experience

John Ratnaswamy founded The Office of John Ratnaswamy, LLC, in April 2019.

He was a co-founder and Partner at the widely recognized energy boutique law firm Rooney Rippie & Ratnaswamy LLP from March 2010 to March 2019.

John was a Partner in the energy and litigation practices at Foley & Lardner LLP from February 2001 to February 2010.

John was a Partner, and before that an Associate, at Hopkins & Sutter, LLP, from September 1987 to January 2001.

John clerked for the late Honorable Francis D. Murnaghan, Jr., of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit (1987), and the late Honorable Norma L. Shapiro of the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania (1985-1986).

Practice Areas

Energy Regulation and Appeals
Professional Responsibility

Education

J.D., Northwestern University
School of Law, cum laude
B.S./M.A., Communication
Studies, Northwestern
University

Admissions

Illinois (1985)
Minnesota (2006)
Wisconsin (2015)
Colorado (2016)
U.S. District Court, Northern
District of Illinois
U.S. District Court, Central
District of Illinois
U.S. District Court, Northern
District of Texas
U.S. Court of Appeals, Fourth
Circuit
U.S. Court of Appeals, Fifth
Circuit
U.S. Court of Appeals,
Seventh Circuit
United States Supreme Court

*The Illinois Supreme Court does not recognize certifications of specialties in the practice of law and no award or recognition is a requirement to practice law in Illinois.

Recent Speaking Engagements

Mr. Ratnaswamy frequently speaks on issues regarding energy regulation and legal and judicial ethics. His presentations include:

- “Ethics – Are You A Cyber Ready Attorney?”, Energy Bar Association Midyear Energy Forum, October 2021.
- "Legal Ethics Issues for State Utility Regulation Practitioners," Wisconsin Public Utility Institute, Public Utilities Law Update 2021, March 2021.
- “Legal Foundations of Regulation,” American Gas Association (AGA) Rates School, July 2020.
- "Legal Ethics Issues for State Utility Regulation Practitioners," Wisconsin Public Utility Institute, Public Utilities Law Update 2020, March 2020.
- Panel Participant on Bulling, Discrimination, and Equality, Chicago Comic and Entertainment Expo (C2E2), February 2020.
- "Ethics Traps for the Unwary and Even for the Wary," Chicago Bar Association Energy, Telecommunications and Water Committee, January 2020.
- “Legal Foundations of Regulation,” American Gas Association (AGA) Rates School, July 2019.
- “State and Local Issues Impacting UAS [Unmanned Aircraft Systems],” AUVSI Exponential All Things Unmanned Conference, April 2019.
- "A Day in the Life of Small Firm Lawyer: Potential Ethics Traps for the Unwary," American Bar Association National Webinar, November 2018.
- "ABA Revised Model Rules on Advertising," Chicago Bar Association Professional Responsibility Committee, September 2018.
- "Avoiding the Mines: Navigating the Ethical Minefields in Today's Practice of Law," American Bar Association Annual Meeting, August 2018.
- “Legal Foundations and Forms of LDC Rate Regulation,” AGA Rate School, July 2018.
- “Transformation of the Electric System and Regulation,” National Asian Pacific American Bar Association, November 2017.
- “Legal Foundations and Forums of LDC Rate Regulation,” AGA Rate School, July 2017.
- “Affiliate Transactions: New Business Models and Regulation,” AGA Legal Forum, July 2017.
- “Solar Power and the Distribution Grid,” Midwest Energy Association, September 2016.
- “Rate Cases and the Law,” AGA Gas Rate School, July 2016.
- “Test Your Knowledge of the Attorney-Client Privilege and More,” 54th Annual Corporate Counsel Institute, October 2015.
- “Rate Cases and the Law,” AGA Gas Rate School, July 2014.

Recent Publications

Mr. Ratnaswamy has published articles on a number of subjects, such as the inter-relationship of federal bankruptcy and energy regulation statutes. He has written over 70 columns on legal ethics in *The Bencher*. His publications include:

- “The Roots of American Legal Ethics Codes,” *The Bencher*, November/December 2023.
- "Seeking Advice About Compliance with Ethics Rules," *The Bencher*, July/August 2023.
- “Legal Ethics and Witnesses,” *The Bencher*, November/December 2022.
- “New ABA Ethics Opinion on Solicitation,” *The Bencher*, July/August 2022.
- “Judicial Participation in Lawyer Diversion and Legal Assistance Programs (New York Report),” *The Bencher*, March/April 2022.
- “Responding to On-Line Criticism,” *The Bencher*, November/December 2021.

- "Virtual Practice," *The Bencher*, July/August 2021.
- "Justice Ginsburg's 1996 Speech on 'Supreme Court Pronouncements on the Conduct of Lawyers,'" *The Bencher*, March/April 2021.
- "Cybersecurity," *The Bencher*, November/December 2020.
- "Disasters and Crisis," *The Bencher*, July/August 2020.
- "Lawyer Well-Being and Attorney Regulation," *The Bencher*, March/April 2020.
- "Legal Ethics and Social Media," *The Bencher*, November/December 2019.
- "Application of Ethics Rules to Conduct Performed Outside of Legal Practice," *The Bencher*, July/August 2019.
- "Fee Financing", *The Bencher*, March/April 2019.
- "Adopted Amendments to ABA Model Rules on Advertising," *The Bencher*, November/December 2018.
- "The Lawyer As Advisor," *The Bencher*, July/August 2018.
- "Proposed Amendments to the ABA Model Rules on Advertising," *The Bencher*, March/April 2018.
- "Adopted Amendments to the ABA Model Rules on Advertising," *The Bencher*, November/December 2017.
- "Crossing Borders," *The Bencher*, November/December 2017.
- "Legal Ethics and Access to Justice," *The Bencher*, July/August 2017.
- "Confidentiality and Withdrawal for Non-Payment of Fees," *The Bencher*, March/April 2017.
- "DC Bar Ethics Opinion Relating to Social Media and Networking," *The Bencher*, November/December 2016.
- "Fee Dispute Arbitration or Mediation," *The Bencher*, July/August 2016.
- "Proposed Ethics Rule on Harassment and Discrimination in the Practice of Law," *The Bencher*, March/April 2016.
- "Lawyer Assistance Programs and Attorney Discipline Agencies," *The Bencher*, November/December 2015.
- "Back to the Beginning," *The Bencher*, July/August 2015.
- "Special Conflicts of Interest for Former and Current Government Officers and Employees," *The Bencher*, March/April 2015.
- "Not Funny At All," *The Bencher*, November/December 2014.
- "Judicial Law Clerks," *The Bencher*, July/August 2014.
- "In the Year 3535," *The Bencher*, March/April 2014.
- "Today Is the Tomorrow...," *The Bencher*, November/December 2013.
- "Pro Bono Expectations and the Ethics Rules," *The Bencher*, July/August 2013.
- "ABA Formal Opinion on Judge's Use of Electronic Social Networking Media," *The Bencher*, March/April 2013.