



Thomas (Tom) W. Stilley

PARTNER
BUSINESS RESTRUCTURING AND
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Tom Stilley is one of the most seasoned bankruptcy and financial restructuring lawyers in the Pacific Northwest. With cases and debtor clients up and down the California, Oregon and Washington coast, Tom is drawn to working with small and mid-sized businesses, including family-owned companies in virtually any industry.

Yet his experience is broad and includes some of the largest bankruptcy and receivership cases in the region over the past 20-plus years. Many of these cases have involved contentiously litigated issues, including appeals to the Ninth Circuit Bankruptcy Appellate Panel and the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals.

Clients who have been fortunate enough to work with Tom during the COVID years have benefitted from his comprehensive knowledge of workouts and restructuring and his familiarity with the judges and opposing lawyers involved in his cases. With the goal of identifying actions that can remedy a business's problems in lieu of Chapter 11 or Chapter 12 bankruptcy filings, Tom and his team are swift and empathetic. They fully understand how difficult bankruptcy can be for business owners and the stresses caused by a bankruptcy or other financial restructuring situation – they are prepared to act fast.

Tom has first-line-of-defense advice for business owners that can't meet their financial commitments: Get help early. Whether farming, ranching, real estate, casinos, religious institutions or other non-profits, equipment financing, manufacturing, healthcare, entertainment venues, or other sectors and businesses, Tom and

Industries

Health Care

Real Estate and Land Use

Practices

Business Restructuring and
Bankruptcy

Health Care

Real Estate and Land Use

Education

BBA, University of Texas at Austin
McCombs School of Business

J.D., University of Houston Law
Center

Admissions

- Oregon State Bar
- Washington State Bar
- United States Bankruptcy Appellate Panel for the Ninth Circuit
- United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit

Honors

- Best Lawyers in America®
Bankruptcy and Creditor Debtor

his team are ready with questions and answers that will start your journey toward a healthier financial future.

In addition to his active bankruptcy and restructuring practice, Tom serves as managing partner of Sussman Shank, and has since his election in 2015. “One of my most important roles is to instill certain values up and down the firm,” Tom said. “Genuinely caring about our clients and our employees, and being generous and understanding with our staff have been long-standing firm values. The lawyers and staff at Sussman Shank genuinely like each other and we treat each other as equals. We know our clients can see this and believe it is a big reason they like working with us.”

THE ADVANTAGE OF WORKING WITH ME

I have more experience dealing with a business’ financial struggles than almost any attorney in the Pacific Northwest. This means I’ve seen and analyzed nearly every problem and have developed plans to reorganize or liquidate the assets of countless troubled companies. Because I am familiar with most financial challenges a client can have, I can quickly suggest the best alternatives and options. As a result, Sussman Shank’s clients realize workable solutions faster and find a pathway to financial recovery sooner. Certain factors streamline a business reorganization case: the most experienced legal team, efficiency that never wastes time or money, and keeping our clients’ emotions in check and their eyes on the goal. The lawyers in our Business Restructuring and Bankruptcy Practice Group excel at this approach.

REPRESENTATIVE WORK

- Lead the legal team for a Washington nutritional supplement manufacturer in a Chapter 11 bankruptcy that resulted in a confirmed plan which allowed the client to restructure its multimillion dollar secured and unsecured debt under a stand-alone plan that included litigation over asset values, DIP loan financing, and lien avoidance issues.
- Achieved confirmation of a contentiously litigated Chapter 12 plan for an Oregon cattle rancher when faced with a lender’s attempt to seize all revenue from cattle sales and liquidate all of the rancher’s cattle, land, and equipment.
- Bankruptcy counsel in Chapter 11 for a large potato farming and warehousing operation in Southern Oregon and Northern California that resulted in a confirmed plan involving multi-year financing, PACA and statutory ag lien issues, farm equipment financing, and lien priority issues that resulted in

Rights / Insolvency and Reorganization Law; Commercial Transactions / UCC Law; Litigation – Bankruptcy (2014 – 2025)

- Best Lawyers in America® “Lawyer of the Year” for Bankruptcy and Creditor Debtor Rights / Insolvency and Reorganization Law, Portland, OR (2023, 2025)
- Best Lawyers in America® “Lawyer of the Year” for Litigation – Bankruptcy, Portland, OR (2017, 2023, 2025)
- Oregon Super Lawyers® (2007 – 2024); Top 50 List (2012 – 2015, 2020, 2023)
- Ninth Circuit Judicial Conference – Lawyer Representative (2017 – 2019)
- Oregon State Bar Debtor-Creditor Section Award of Merit (2021)

paying the secured debt, equipment financing, and all unsecured claims in full.

- Bankruptcy counsel to the Archdiocese of Portland and the Society of Jesus Northwest Province in each of their Chapter 11 bankruptcy cases when faced with hundreds of claims for clergy sex abuse of minors, and which resulted in confirmed plans in both cases that provided a mechanism to resolve a pay claims in the hundreds of millions of dollars by the debtors and their insurers. The Archdiocese of Portland case was the first Chapter 11 filed by a Catholic Diocese in the United States and formed the basis of reorganization plans proposed by many other dioceses to follow.
- Saved a homebuilder client in Washington from liquidation of its numerous residential construction projects in the wake of the 2008-2009 mortgage crisis through litigation with its lender in three related Chapter 11 bankruptcy cases and culminating in a confirmed plan that paid all creditors in full and preserved millions of dollars in unencumbered assets for the client

PUBLICATIONS

- Commercial Leasing Issues in Bankruptcies and Receiverships, Law Seminars International, 2020
- When the Judges Disagree: A discussion of Differences of Opinion Within the Circuit and Recent Appellate Decisions, 9th Circuit Judicial Conference, 2018
- Bankruptcy Concerns for the Commercial Real Estate Lawyer, Oregon State Bar, 2018
- From Churches to Hospitals: Topics in Nonprofit Organizations Chapter 11 Cases, Northwest Bankruptcy Institute, 2018
- How Should Valuation be Raised and Valuation Standards, 9th Circuit Chief Bankruptcy Judges Conference, 2017

SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

["The State of the Real Estate Insolvency Market: Workouts, Receiverships, and Commercial Real Estate Bankruptcies," 37th Annual NW Bankruptcy Institute \(2024\)](#)

ORGANIZATIONS

Professional Affiliations

- Oregon State Bar Association, Debtor-Creditor Section

- Executive Committee (2002-2007, Chairperson 2006)
 - Legislative Committee (1990-2015, Chairperson 1996-2001)
 - Annual Meeting Committee (Chairperson 2006-Present)
- Washington State Bar Association, Creditor Debtor Section
- Multnomah Bar Association
 - Golf Committee (Chairperson 1997-2000)
- Turnaround Management Association

Community Affiliations

- Eastmoreland Neighborhood Association

PERSONAL INTERESTS

People tell me that I'm a great cook. My Texas roots taught me to love and master BBQ, but I also cook a lot of spicy Cajun food. Long before bread baking became a Tik Tok and Instagram sensation during COVID, I was turning out loaves that my family and friends craved. I learned from my mom, and my son is now a fine cook, too.

The Pacific Northwest outdoors also call me – I'm an avid cyclist, hiker and sometimes bird hunter. Our Brittany Spaniel, Cooper, relishes his dual role of part-time bird dog and rest-of-the-time family pet. My wife and I love international travel, gardening and sharing new experiences with friends and family.