

JAMES J. URBAN

OF COUNSEL

Lansing

517 372 4385

urban@butzel.com



James J. Urban has concentrated his practice in the representation of infrastructure contractors and their trade associations for more than four decades. He has successfully resolved construction disputes throughout Michigan, across the country, and in Canada. Mr. Urban also serves as an arbitrator and mediator in construction disputes on public and private projects.

Mr. Urban has extensive experience representing infrastructure contractors in the public and private sectors. He counsels clients on a wide variety of challenges contractors face, ranging from being part of contractor bidding teams, to claims recognition, claims avoidance, and claims development during the construction process. He also represents construction clients in claims prosecution in the administrative process in state and federal courts and arbitration tribunals. James represents construction clients in competitive bidding disputes, Federal False Claims Act investigations, construction liens, surety matters, and performance and payment bond claims on state municipal and federal projects, public utility disputes, and additionally handles contract drafting and negotiation. He has prevailed in myriad construction matters for clients throughout Michigan, and in Indiana, Ohio, Florida, South Carolina, Arkansas, Kansas, Texas, and Canada.

Clients benefit from James' impressive level of experience in representing construction industry trade associations. He has been at the forefront of numerous significant developments affecting the infrastructure construction industry in Michigan over the past several decades. Examples of his involvement in the industry include successfully representing a coalition of industry associations challenging the Michigan Department of

Primary Practice Areas

Public Private Partnerships

All Related Practice Areas

Construction

Construction Litigation

Construction Specialty Team

Governmental

Infrastructure & Transportation

Public Private Partnerships

JAMES J. URBAN

Transportation's (MDOT) attempt to implement performance warranties in Michigan; serving as lead counsel in the historic merger of the Michigan Road Builders Association and the Associated Underground Contractors Association to form the Michigan Transportation and Infrastructure Association (MITA); serving as lead counsel in the formation of the Michigan Paving Association (MPA) and as lead counsel in the subsequent merger of MPA and the Michigan Asphalt Paving Association to form the Asphalt Paving Association of Michigan (APAM); serving as lead counsel in the formation of the Michigan Damage Prevention Board (MDPB), a cooperative venture between Michigan's major public utilities and the infrastructure construction industry), and negotiating and drafting the MDPB Best Practices Contract between the major public utilities and the infrastructure construction industry represented by MITA. Additional significant accomplishments include Mr. Urban's role as the principal drafter of the initial version of Michigan's new MISS DIG Act (enacted November, 2014); successfully representing two contractors and MITA in litigation challenging MDOT and the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) enforcement of the Prompt Payment Regulation and then serving as industry lead counsel in the cooperative effort between the industry and MDOT in the redrafting of the Prompt Payment Regulation and enforcement guidelines for MDOT federally-assisted construction contracts.

Mr. Urban is frequently sought to share his deep knowledge of the construction industry and various related trade associations, public works contracting, and Construction Law. As such, he regularly presents at industry events. He has also published numerous articles on these topics. He has served as industry counsel to the government industry committee involved in the redrafting of the MDOT Standard Specifications for Construction, 1990, 1996, 2003, and 2020 Editions.

James J. Urban is Of Counsel at Butzel and serves as Co-Managing Shareholder of the firm's Lansing office. He is a member of the State Bar of Michigan; American Bar Association, Construction Law Forum; Ingham County Bar Association; and a former member of the Michigan Prosecuting Attorneys Association. Mr. Urban is admitted to practice in the US Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit and in the US District Courts for the Eastern and Western Districts of Michigan. Prior to entering private practice, he was an Assistant Prosecuting Attorney for Livingston County, Michigan.

Credentials

EDUCATION

Thomas M. Cooley Law School, J.D., (*cum laude*) (1982)

Michigan State University, B.A. (1977)

ADMISSIONS

Michigan

JAMES J. URBAN

United States Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit

United States District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan

United States District Court for the Western District of Michigan

MEMBERSHIPS

State Bar of Michigan – Construction Law Committee; Administrative Law Section

American Bar Association – Construction Law Forum; Administrative Law Section

Ingham County Bar Association

Michigan Department of Transportation – Committee Member

Prosecuting Attorneys Association of Michigan (past member)

Awards & Recognitions

Best Lawyers in America® – "Lawyer of the Year" – Litigation – Construction, 2013–2014; 2016–2025

Best Lawyers in America® – Construction Law, 2007–2024, 2026; Litigation – Construction, 2011–2024, 2026

Michigan *Super Lawyers* – Construction Litigation, 2007–2023

DBusiness Magazine – Top Lawyers in Metro Detroit – Construction Litigation, 2014; 2017–2021