John Owen Gwathmey

Partner

Richmond

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Fortune 500 industrial and manufacturing companies and market leaders in the fast-growing electrical vehicle and renewable energy sectors turn to John Owen for advice regarding mergers and acquisitions, joint ventures, securities laws, equity offerings, and venture investments.

OVERVIEW

John Owen leverages his more than 30 years of experience to help his clients navigate complex issues around securities and corporate law. He focuses on mergers and acquisitions, joint ventures, private equity and venture capital, public and private securities offerings, federal securities laws (including compliance with the Sarbanes-Oxley Act), corporate governance, and general corporate law.

John Owen's clients include automotive manufacturers, energy companies, manufacturing companies, chemical and industrial companies, biotechnology and pharmaceutical companies, and private equity and venture capital funds.

John Owen regularly advises the boards of directors of Virginia corporations regarding their fiduciary duties under Virginia law and is actively involved on an *ad hoc* committee that monitors and proposes changes to the Virginia Stock Corporation Act.

In the area of securities law, John Owen represents private equity and venture capital funds in connection with fund formation, initial and subsequent equity offerings, and portfolio acquisitions. He has also represented public companies and underwriters in connection with initial and secondary public offerings and tender offers.

REPRESENTATIVE MATTERS

- Represented an automotive manufacturer in connection with:
  - $11.4 billion joint venture to build electric vehicle batteries with a Korean battery manufacturer.
  - Purchase of a provider of charging management and fleet monitoring software for electric vehicles.
  - Investment in a company developing solid-state vehicle battery technology.
  - Divestiture of its electric scooter operation to a European shared mobility company.
- Represented a specialty chemical company in connection with:
  - $570 million divestiture of its fine chemistry services business to a public chemical company.
  - $416 million divestiture of its polyolefin catalysts business to a public chemical company.

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- Acquisition of a fine chemicals services business from a public Dutch biosciences company.
- $763 million acquisition of a petroleum refinery catalyst business from a public Dutch chemical manufacturing company.
- Investment in a venture fund focused on energy storage technology companies.

- Represented an agricultural processing company in connection with:
  - Acquisition of a privately held, specialty ingredient, flavoring and food company with bottling and packaging capabilities.
  - Acquisition of a privately held, natural, specialty dehydrated vegetable, fruit and herb processing company.
  - Acquisition of a privately held, specialty fruit and vegetable ingredient processor.
- Represented a biotechnology private equity fund in connection with:
  - $184 million initial public offering on the New York Stock Exchange of its synthetic biotechnology portfolio company.
  - $2.6 billion sale of its public pharmaceutical portfolio company to a UK pharmaceutical company.
  - Purchase of bioengineering assets from a public biotechnology company.
- Represented a public utility in connection with several strategic venture capital investments in renewable energy companies.
  - Advised a public media company regarding fiduciary duties and corporate governance under the Virginia Stock Corporation Act in connection with:
  - $4.6 billion merger with a public diversified media company.
  - Merger with a private broadcasting company.
- Regularly advise Virginia public companies in connection with defenses against a hostile or unsolicited takeover attempt.

AWARDS

- *Best Lawyers in America*®: “Lawyer of the Year” in Corporate Law (2023), Securities / Capital Markets Law (2023, 2025), Mergers and Acquisitions Law (2026)
- *Best Lawyers in America*®: Corporate Law (2021-2027), Mergers and Acquisitions Law (2023-2027), Securities / Capital Markets Law (2021-2027)

- *Super Lawyers®:* Virginia (2006-2021)
- *BTI Consulting Group*: Client Service All-Star (2011, 2020)
- *Chambers USA*: Corporate/M&A, Southern Virginia (2014-2026)
- *Law & Politics*: Super Lawyers, Virginia (2006-2020)
- *Virginia Business Magazine*: Legal Elite – Business Law (2009-2010, 2013, 2023, 2025)
- Aylett Country Day School: Outstanding Alumni Award (2008)

TOP AREAS OF FOCUS

- Corporate
- Mergers + Acquisitions

ALL AREAS OF FOCUS

- Capital Markets
- Corporate
- Corporate Governance
- Emerging Companies + Venture Capital

- Energy
- International
- Litigation + Trial
- Mergers + Acquisitions

PROFESSIONAL/COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- Member, American Bar Association
- Member, Virginia Bar Association
- Former chair, Business Law Section, Virginia Bar Association
- Member, Virginia Law Foundation Fellow, former member of Fellows Committee
- Former president, Board of Trustees, Board of Advisers, Historic Richmond Foundation
- Vice president, former president, Board of Directors, Aylett Country Day School
- Board of Directors, former chair, Children's Home Society

EDUCATION AND CERTIFICATIONS

EDUCATION

- University of Virginia School of Law, J.D., *Order of the Coif*, 1990
- University of Virginia, M.B.A., 1990
- Princeton University, A.B., 1985

BAR ADMISSIONS

- Virginia

PUBLICATIONS

- Co-author, "Recent Trends in Initial Public Offerings," *A Milestone Year in the Private Equity Arena, A Financier Worldwide Supplement*, 2005.
- Co-author, "The Erosion of the Power of the Board of Directors," *Virginia Business Magazine*, June 2005.