Josh Combs

Partner

Atlanta

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Josh focuses on the state regulation of electric utilities. He helps clients navigate the dynamic ecosystem of rapidly evolving regulatory, legislative, and policy frameworks governing the energy industry.

OVERVIEW

Leveraging broad, multijurisdictional experience, Josh has advocacy experience in nearly every type of regulatory proceeding covering the range of utility regulation, including base rate cases, integrated resource plans (IRPs), resource certifications, utility mergers, and performance-based rulemakings. He advises clients on mission-critical rate litigation matters, grid investment plan proposals, innovative performance-based ratemaking issues, and cost recovery strategies for strategic renewable investments, including battery energy storage, solar power, and legacy T&D projects.

Josh has represented clients in regulatory proceedings across the southeastern U.S., including before the Georgia Public Service Commission, North Carolina Utilities Commission, Florida Public Service Commission, Public Service Commission of South Carolina, and the Virginia State Corporation Commission.

REPRESENTATIVE MATTERS

- Developed and secured regulatory approval for tariffs, programs, special contracts, and other frameworks to support the integration and provision of electric service to large load customers.
- Represented a public utility in the certification of a $1 billion battery energy storage project portfolio before Georgia Public Service Commission.
- Represented a public utility in a Percentage of Income Payment Plan rate proceeding before the Virginia State Corporation Commission.
- Represented a public utility in base rate proceedings before the Florida Public Service Commission.
- Represented and counseled two public utility operating companies in base rate case proceedings before the North Carolina Public Utilities Commission.
- Represented a public utility in a rate case and negotiated a settlement whereby the state commission approved, without modification, a three-year accounting order that provided the stable and constructive rates and timely recovery needed to make the significant capital investments deemed appropriate by the state commission.
- Counseled two public utilities in rulemaking proceedings to implement performance-based regulation.
- Assisted in representing and counseling two public utility operating companies in base rate case proceedings

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before the Public Service Commission of South Carolina.

- Managed multistate discovery and provided general legal analysis in state proceedings to obtain regulatory approvals in the merger of Southern Company and AGL Resources in five jurisdictions.

AWARDS

- *Best Lawyers in America®: Ones to Watch*: Energy Law (2022-2026)
- Emory University: “40 Under Forty” (2023)
- National Black Lawyers Top 40 Under 40 (2023)
- Georgia Southern University Alumni Association “40 Under 40” Class of 2020

TOP AREAS OF FOCUS

- Energy
- Energy Policy + Legislation
- Energy Storage
- State Energy Regulation

PROFESSIONAL/COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- Board of Directors, Energy Bar Association’s Southern Chapter
- Staff counsel, Georgia Lawyer Competency Task Force (2022)
- Board member, Advance Atlanta
- Board member, Emory University Annual Giving Board (2017-2018)
- American Association of Blacks in Energy
- American Bar Association

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- Extern, Office of the Georgia Attorney General, 2013

EDUCATION AND CERTIFICATIONS

EDUCATION

- Emory University School of Law, J.D., 2015, National Order of the Barristers; Emory Law Mock Trial Society Board Member
- Georgia Southern University, B.S., *summa cum laude*, 2012

BAR ADMISSIONS

- Georgia
- Kentucky

COURT ADMISSIONS

- Georgia Superior Courts

SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

- Speaker, "Vertically Integrated, Regionally Connected: IRPs and Transmission Planning in the Southeast," Troutman Pepper Locke, October 14, 2026.
- Speaker, "Speed to Power: The Vertically Integrated Advantage in the Southeast," Troutman Pepper Locke, October 7, 2026.
- Speaker, "Building the Grid, Building Communities: Transmission Investment, Affordability, and Accountability in the Southeast," Troutman Pepper Locke, September 30, 2026.
- Speaker, "Building the Grid: The State and Local Transmission Puzzle — Not in My Backyard, Not on My Bill: The Human Side of Grid Expansion," Troutman Pepper Locke, August 26, 2026.
- Speaker, "Building the Grid: Solving the State and Local Transmission Puzzle — and Why Speed to Power Depends on It," Troutman Pepper Locke, August 12, 2026.
- Speaker, "Renewable & Nuclear Energy Policy, Investment & Market Dynamics for Renewables & Nuclear Energy," 48th AABE Annual Conference, May 1, 2025.
- Speaker, "Capacity Crunch Series Continued: Balancing Reliability, Unprecedented Load Growth & Affordability in the Energy Transition (Part 2)," *Energy Law Insights*, October 23, 2024.
- Speaker, "Capacity Crunch Series Continued: Balancing Reliability, Unprecedented Load Growth & Affordability in the Energy Transition (Part 1)," *Energy Law Insights*, October 17, 2024.
- Speaker, "Charging Transportation Electrification Forward: Identifying Opportunities & Regulatory Solutions in the Rapidly Evolving EV Market," *Energy Law Insights*, April 24, 2024.
- Speaker, "The Capacity Crunch, Part Three: Unpacking the Power of the IRA: The Potential Game-Changing Opportunities for Utilities," *Energy Law Insights*, January 18, 2024.
- Speaker, "The Capacity Crunch, Part Two: Public Utilities, Resource Planning & Deployment, and the IRA," *Energy Law Insights*, January 16, 2024.
- Speaker, "The Capacity Crunch, Part One: Reliability and Decarbonization in the Short Term," *Energy Law Insights*, January 9, 2024.
- Presenter, "Best Practices and Practical Considerations for Remote Regulatory Hearings," Webinar, September 3, 2020.
- Moderator, "A Discussion With Justice Leah Ward Sears," Emory University School of Law.

PUBLICATIONS

- Podcast, "Duke Develops Flexible Energy Storage Options to Enhance Reliability and Maximize Value With Laurel Meeks, Duke Energy," *Battery + Storage Podcast*, June 21, 2024.
- Author, "Old King Coal's Kingdom Goes Green: How Kentucky Is Investing in Renewable Energy," *Renewable Energy World*, January 24, 2024.
- Contributor, "Unlocking U.S. Transmission Upgrades – Are We on the Cusp of Real Progress? Bridging the Gap Between Planning and Permitting," *Troutman Pepper*, November 27, 2023.
- Author, "#ProTips: Millennial Energy Lawyer's Perspective on Professional Development," *The YLD Review*, State Bar of Georgia Young Lawyers Division, June 24, 2019.
- Co-author, "Rhode Island Public Utilities Commission Green Lights Grid Modernization Plan, Establishes Performance-Based Incentive Framework For National Grid," *Renewable Insights*, September 4, 2018.