

William R. Bennett III | Partner
Maritime

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Bill Bennett is a member of our Maritime Emergency Response Team (“MERT”).

Bill has more than 30 years’ experience representing stakeholders in the global shipping, energy, and commodities markets. Bill handles contentious and non-contentious matters for a large global client base. He has extensive experience arbitrating and litigating matters involving complex shipping, international trade, commodities, and energy disputes as well as significant ship casualties involving sinkings, fire, wrongful death, and personal injury. His experience includes arbitrating under the rules of the AAA, ICDR, SMA, ICE, and NAEGA, as well as numerous ad hoc arbitrations. Bill is a frequent presenter on numerous topics impacting the global shipping market.

Chambers USA notes that clients describe Bill as “very personable, doesn’t deal in legalese, provides succinct and clear advice and provides it quickly,” “responsive, hard-working and dedicated to creating a successful outcome,” “a terrific litigator who is smart and knows what he’s doing,” and “brilliant, straightforward, well-reasoned and cuts to the chase.”

Bill is a graduate of SUNY Maritime College, sailed as a licensed officer, and holds a degree in Naval Architecture. In connection with his education at SUNY Maritime College, he obtained his Unlimited Third Mate’s license from the United States Coast Guard (“USCG”). He worked aboard various vessels in the capacity of Third Mate, Second Mate (limited tonnage), and Master (limited tonnage), including oil tankers, ocean-going tugs, dredges, and yachts.

Outside The Firm

Bill enjoys cycling, running, hiking, and fishing. He has completed three marathons.

Select Engagements

- Represented the builder of a large bridge for a construction delay claim in excess of \$100 million resulting from delays caused when a three-tug barge flotilla allided with bridge construction equipment.
- Led a team of attorneys that obtained an international arbitration award in excess of \$31 million against a foreign government which was recognized, confirmed, and converted into a money Judgment.
- Successfully recovered in excess of \$4.6 million on behalf of an international chemical company against a vessel owner for damage to cargo.
- Successfully recovered in excess of \$4 million due under a long-term vessel charter on behalf of a vessel owner.
- Successfully recovered in excess of \$8 million on behalf of a coal trader following a verdict in the Eastern District of Virginia against a vessel owner's alter ego entities.
- Successfully recovered in excess of \$3 million on behalf of a foreign bank regarding a trade credit insurance dispute.
- Represented a large commodity trader seeking to recover in excess of \$30 million for losses resulting from fraud.
- Represented a fast ferry operator following an allision that resulted in more than 100 claims of personal injury.
- Represented the interest of the Master of the *El Faro* following its sinking and loss of all crew during USCG Marine Board of Investigation hearings.
- Obtained a settlement for a seafood importer in excess of a million dollars against a defendant warehouse for damage to frozen shrimp and avoiding package limitation.
- Represented one of the largest Japanese shipowners in proceedings subsequent to its bankruptcy filing and successfully obtaining a release of its vessel and assets.

Admissions

- New Jersey
- Supreme Court of the United States
- United States Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit
- United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit
- U.S. District Court - New Jersey
- New York
- U.S. District Court - District of Connecticut
- U.S. District Court - Eastern District of New York
- U.S. District Court - Southern District of New York
- United States Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit
- United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit
- United States Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit

Education

- State University of New York at Maritime College, BE
- St. John's University School of Law, JD

Recognitions

- AV Preeminent®, listed in Martindale-Hubbell®
- 2024, Admiralty and Maritime Law in New York, listed in *Best Lawyers in America*©
- 2018–2023, Transportation: Shipping/Maritime: Litigation Law, listed in *Chambers USA*
- 2019–2023, listed in *The Legal 500 United States*
- 2022–2023, “Leading Lawyer,” listed in *The Legal 500’s Guide to Outstanding Lawyers Nationwide*
- 2013–2023, New York Metro “Super Lawyer” in Transportation & Maritime, listed in *Super Lawyers*