

From the Orlando Business Journal:

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## How longtime lawyer Bud Bennington and his firm are shaping the Orlando litigation scene

Sep 27, 2019, 11:28am EDT Updated: Sep 27, 2019, 3:50pm EDT

With a multi-decade legal career that even included a bid for U.S. Congress, lawyer [Alfred J. "Bud" Bennington Jr.](#) has seen it all, and then some.

Bennington, who specializes in business litigation, has been in the business for 42 years, making him one of Central Florida's longest-practicing and most well-known lawyers. His illustrious career has taken him to more than 80 trials for both Fortune 500 companies and small businesses.

"I love going to court, because it's the only place where everybody gets a turn." Bennington told *Orlando Business Journal*. "It's the most civilized way of resolving disputes."

Since 2002, he has worked at [Shutts & Bowen LLP](#)'s Orlando office, where he has handled a long list of high-profile cases, including a 2007 landmark environmental litigation case in which he defended business management consultant [Crescent Resources LLC](#) against multiple plaintiffs suing for personal injury and death due to exposure to hazardous substances.

Most recently, Bennington made headlines for representing hospitality companies like Orlando-based [Wyndham Destinations Inc.](#) (NYSE: WYND) and Diamond Resorts in cases against third-party timeshare exit companies.

Bennington's former role as co-chairman of Shutts & Bowen's business litigation practice group contributed greatly to the agency's growth as a provider of legal services in the region. The firm landed the No. 6 spot on *Orlando Business Journal's* 2019 list of Central Florida's largest litigation law firms.

Here, Bennington shares more about his firm's success as a local leader in litigation:

**What do you enjoy most about working at Shutts & Bowen?** I think probably the best thing is our culture. It is diverse in terms of the different types of people we have. We have every aspect of people who are conservative to liberal to nonpolitical, both spiritual and nonspiritual. I really find that enjoyable because everybody generally gets along. Particularly in Orlando, I think one of our notable characteristics is that we have a very low turnover rate. That's a testament to the culture of the firm. We're a true partnership.



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Bud Bennington, attorney with Shutts & Bowen LLP law firm

**How has litigation law changed over the last 42 years?** In years past, there was always an opportunity to be heard in a courtroom. The judiciary was always the place where government would spend its money first because it was the most sacrosanct part of our democracy. Now, for whatever reason, the money doesn't go there. Unfortunately, because the number of cases being filed has increased, courts are now understaffed and there are not enough judges. It takes too long to get a hearing on even the simplest of a motion. The public loses faith in the system because their cases are getting resolved without them having the benefit of going to court and seeing what happens. I think that's not a good thing for society, because there's something cathartic about allowing people who have a dispute to have their moment.

**What's the biggest mistake businesses make during litigation?** The biggest mistake is that businesses don't get legal advice beforehand. I can't tell you how many times businesses say, "I don't want to spend money on lawyers right now, so we'll do this deal ourselves." They won't get the consultation they need and they'll make a dumb deal, or they'll copy something somebody else did. People often criticize lawyers, but I've often said, "If people would just behave appropriately, you could put a lot of lawyers out of business."

**What's your favorite part about litigation?** Going to trial. There's nothing like it. It's a lot of pressure, but it's fun. If you're the plaintiff, you have to build your case and you have the burden of establishing that what you're saying is true. You have to approach it as though you were an athlete. You have to be prepared and work hard.

**Who are some rising star litigators at your firm?** Partner Glennys Ortega Rubin, Senior Attorney [Christian Leger](#), Partner [Michael Quinn](#), Attorney [Nicole Ballante](#) and Partner [Erik Szabo](#)

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[Alfred J. "Bud" Bennington Jr.](#), partner, Shutts & Bowen LLP

**Age:** 66

**Family:** Wife and two children

**Website:** <https://shutts.com/>

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