



BENJAMIN J. GIBSON

PARTNER

BGibson@shutts.com

1-850-241-1723 - [Tallahassee](#)

215 South Monroe Street, Suite 804, Tallahassee, FL 32301

Ben Gibson is a partner in the Tallahassee office of Shutts & Bowen LLP, where he is Vice-Chair of the Appellate practice group. Ben represents clients facing high-stakes legal issues at the intersection of business, politics, and government. His statewide practice focuses on representing corporate, political, and government clients in appellate, litigation, and administrative matters as well as government affairs.

Ben regularly counsels political candidates, party committees, corporate, and nonprofit entities on navigating and complying with the complex federal, state, and local laws that govern their political activity. He represents clients in administrative and enforcement matters before the Federal Election Commission, Florida Elections Commission, and the Florida Commission on Ethics.

As general counsel to the Republican Party of Florida during the 2018 election cycle, Ben led all of the party's legal efforts through three historic statewide recounts, and represented Rick Scott for U.S. Senate and the National Republican Senatorial Committee. He also has represented the Republican National Committee and the National Republican Congressional Committee in high-profile litigation in Florida.

Ben frequently advises public officials, government agencies, and corporate entities on compliance with Florida's complex Ethics Code and gift laws, financial disclosure, public records, sunshine law, and Florida Attorney General investigations.

Ben's approach to a client's legal needs is informed by his deep understanding of Florida government and politics. In 2018, he was named general counsel to Florida Governor-elect Ron DeSantis' Transition Team, advising the new administration on legal issues and Governor-elect DeSantis on his appointment of three Florida Supreme Court Justices. Ben has also served as outside counsel to the Florida Constitution Revision Commission and legal counsel to the state's economic development organization, Enterprise Florida, Inc.

Benjamin J. Gibson

Before joining Shutts, Ben gained significant executive branch legal experience serving as the Deputy General Counsel and an Assistant General Counsel to Florida Governor Rick Scott for nearly five years. In those roles, he provided legal counsel to the Executive Office of the Governor and oversaw all high-profile litigation and legal issues at numerous executive branch agencies including the Department of State, Department of Business and Professional Regulation, Department of Management Services, Department of Lottery, and Department of Education. He also helped draft and negotiate on behalf of the State of Florida a \$3 billion-dollar gaming compact with the Seminole Tribe of Florida that was ultimately signed by the Governor. In addition, Ben personally advised the Governor on more than 120 judicial appointments to Florida's trial courts, District Courts of Appeal, and the Supreme Court.

Ben's legislative experience includes serving as an attorney with the Florida House of Representatives in the Office of the General Counsel advising the Speaker of the House and with the House Community & Military Affairs Subcommittee. As a House staff attorney in 2011, Ben helped draft the largest rewrite of Florida's growth management laws in 25 years, chapter 2011-139, Laws of Florida.

Ben is actively involved in public service as a member of Florida's State Board of Education, which oversees VPK-12 public education and Florida's State College System. He also serves as Chair of Florida's First District Court of Appeal Judicial Nominating Commission.

Before joining Shutts, Ben founded his own law firm focusing on election and government law. He is a frequent speaker on topics of political law and state policy issues.

Practice Areas

Appellate

Government Law

Litigation

Political Law

Accolades

- *INFLUENCE Magazine's* INFLUENCE 100 List - "The 100 Most Influential People in Florida Politics", 2020
- *Florida Trend's Legal Elite*, Top Government Attorneys, 2012, 2013, 2016, 2017
- Florida State University Alumni Association, "Thirty Under 30" Award, 2013

Benjamin J. Gibson

Education

- Florida State University College of Law, J.D., *cum laude*, 2008
 - Member, *Journal of Transnational Law & Policy*, 2006-2008
- University of Florida, B.A., in Political Science, *cum laude*, 2005

Bar Admissions

Florida

Court Admissions

- U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit
- U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Florida
- U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Florida
- U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Florida

Professional and Civic

- First District Court of Appeal Judicial Nominating Commission, appointed by Governor, 2018-present, Chair 2020-2021; Vice Chair 2019-2020
- State Board of Education, appointed by Governor and confirmed by State Senate, 2017-present
- Florida Virtual School, Board of Trustees, 2019-2020
- Florida Bar Standing Committee on Mental Health & Wellness of Florida Lawyers, 2018-present
- Florida Bar Special Committee on Mental Health & Wellness of Florida Lawyers, 2017-2018
- Florida Bar Annual Convention Committee, 2017-present
- Board of Governors, The Florida Bar Young Lawyers Division elected from Second Circuit, June 2012-June 2020
 - Executive Committee, 2019-2020; Co-Chair, Legislative Affairs Committee, 2019-2020; Chair, Co-Chair, Health & Wellness Committee, 2015-2019; Chair, Communications Committee, 2014-2015
- Leadership Florida, Connect Florida Class VII, 2016-2017
- Florida Commission on Access to Civil Justice, appointed by Chief Justice, 2015-2016
- Tallahassee Bar Association, Young Lawyers Section, 2010-2014
- James Madison Institute, Tallahassee Board of Advisors, 2016-17; Leaders Fellowship Class I, 2014-2015

Benjamin J. Gibson

- American Enterprise Institute, Leadership Network, Spring 2016
- Republican National Lawyers Association, Member
- Federalist Society, Member
- University of Florida Alumni Association, Member

Presentations

- Speaker, *2020 Elections- What You Need to Know*, Republican Party of Florida Annual Meeting, Jupiter, FL, January 10, 2020
- Speaker, *Florida's Changing Judiciary—Challenges and Opportunities*, Enterprise Florida, Inc. Board Meeting, West Palm Beach, FL, November 13, 2019.
- Speaker, *Ethics Compliance for JNC Members*, Judicial Nominating Commissioner Training, Tallahassee, FL, October 21, 2019
- Speaker, *What Happened in Florida in 2018: Lessons Learned, Litigation, and the Importance of Good Procedures and Officials Who Follow Them*, Republican National Lawyers Association Election Law Seminar, Charlotte, NC, August 2, 2019
- Speaker, *Winning Elections in the Courtroom*, Republican National Committee Summer Meeting, Charlotte, NC, July 31, 2019
- Speaker, *Fighting for the Rule of Law: from Recounts to the New Florida Supreme Court*, The Federalist Society- Tampa Bay Lawyers Chapter, Tampa, FL, April 4, 2019
- Speaker, *Building a Diverse Legal Practice*, Florida State Law, Student Bar Association, Tallahassee, FL, February 26, 2019
- Speaker, *Evening with the Bench and Bar, Justice Alan Lawson and Ben Gibson*, Florida State Law, Tallahassee, FL, January 22, 2019
- Speaker, *Election Day Operations Lawyer Training*, National Republican Senatorial Committee, Orlando, FL and Tallahassee, FL, October 2018
- Speaker, *Election Law Compliance for Republican Executive Committees*, Republican Party of Florida Quarterly Meeting, Tampa, FL, April 6, 2018
- Speaker, *Public Records and the Judicial Nominating Commissions*, Judicial Nominating Commissioner Training, Orlando, FL, February 2, 2018
- Speaker, *Public Records and Ethics Compliance under Florida Law*, Enterprise Florida, Inc., Employee Training, Orlando, FL, January 19, 2018
- Speaker, *Sunshine Law and Public Records*, Florida Sports Foundation, Inc., Board Member Training, Orlando, FL, November 10, 2017
- Speaker, *Article I, Section 3, Blaine Amendment*, Florida Constitution Revision Commission, Declaration of Rights Committee, Tallahassee, FL, November 29, 2017

Benjamin J. Gibson

- Speaker, *School Choice and the Florida Constitution*, Florida Constitution Revision Commission, Education Committee, Tallahassee, FL, November 27, 2017
- Speaker, *Article IX of the Florida Constitution, Education*, Florida Constitution Revision Commission Training, via web, September 19, 2017
- Speaker, *Campaign Legal Pitfalls*, Republican Party of Florida Quarterly Meeting, Orlando, FL, August 11, 2017
- Speaker, *Public Records and Ethics*, Florida Constitution Revision Commission Organization Meeting, Senate Chambers, March 20, 2017

Publications

- Co-Author, "[Amendment 8: School Board Term Limits and Duties; Public Schools](#)," *The Florida Bar Journal*, Volume 92, No. 8, September/October 2018

Media Mentions

- "[Meet the Legal Muscle Battling for Team Trump](#)," *Law360* (November 2, 2020)
- [Benjamin Gibson recognized as one of "The 100 Most Influential People in Florida Politics,"](#) *INFLUENCE Magazine* (October 24, 2020)
- "[Understanding Amendment 3](#)," WESH 2 News (October 20, 2020)
- [Elections Commission finds political committee did not violate law](#), *Sarasota Herald-Tribune* (August 26, 2020)
- [Benjamin Gibson comments on dirty campaign tactics](#), *Florida Politics* (Aug. 18, 2020)
- "[Fake texts and YouTube video spread disinformation about Republican primary candidate on election day](#)," *CNNPolitics* (Aug. 18, 2020)
- "[Evening with the Bench & the Bar](#)," *Florida State University College of Law* (February 1, 2019)
- "[Florida Lawyers at the Center of Florida's Recounts](#)," *The Florida Bar* (December 15, 2018)
- "[Ron DeSantis transition team announces first round of staff hires](#)," *Florida Politics*, (November 13, 2018)
- "[Big Law Mustering for Suit Over Florida Recount in Race Between Rick Scott and Bill Nelson](#)," *Law.com* (November 09, 2018)
- "[Rick Scott Appoints Ben Gibson to State Board of Education](#)," *Florida Politics* (July 14, 2017)