



Ryan Billings

FOR STATE BAR PRESIDENT-ELECT

I am running for President-Elect to foster a State Bar that offers something meaningful to every member, where every member has a voice, and every member feels welcome, respected, and valued.

THE STATE BAR OF WISCONSIN IS FOR ALL OF US

The President of the State Bar must represent everyone, from a solo general practitioner in rural Wisconsin to a niche specialist at a hundred-plus-lawyer firm in Milwaukee or an out-of-state attorney who maintains their Wisconsin license. I have experience across that spectrum. I grew up in a small town but practiced for many years in New York City. I have worked for Big Law, Small Law, and Medium Law, starting as an intern with a small firm in Sheboygan, moving to a 500-lawyer firm in New York, and eventually landing at a mid-sized firm in Glendale. For 25 years, I have counted a wide variety of dedicated, hard-working attorneys as my colleagues. Every lawyer faces their own triumphs and hardships over the course of their career. The State Bar must offer something meaningful to every lawyer who is licensed to practice in Wisconsin.

THE PRESIDENT SHOULD SERVE ALL WISCONSIN-LICENSED LAWYERS

I can help the Bar meet that challenge. Beyond my broad experience in the legal world, I strive to be a good listener and to see how both sides of a debate bring meaningful perspectives to the discussion. Listening closely and taking feedback from resident and non-resident Wisconsin lawyers to heart is the first step toward improving the Bar's ability to meet every lawyer's needs. The next step is taking action. My experience working in a wide variety of settings has given me valuable insight into the tools employed by lawyers in different legal communities to solve problems, and I would use that knowledge to connect existing resources to those who need them, and to help develop new resources to meet new challenges.

LAWYERS ARE AND SHOULD BE A FORCE FOR GOOD

We live in an increasingly polarized world. Lawyers can and should be an important force for measured, robust civil discourse that builds communities rather than tearing them apart and harnesses the crucible of the adversarial system to promote truth and justice. My experience and even-keeled temperament make me well situated to build bridges between people with differing backgrounds and perspectives.

THE PRESIDENT SHOULD SUPPORT LAWYER WELL-BEING

Although every lawyer's situation is unique, there are common challenges facing Wisconsin lawyers, including the increasing stress placed on lawyers by today's non-stop work environment. Lawyers are expected to be always available (exacerbated by the blurring of work and home life resulting from the pandemic). I am appalled by studies reflecting the rising numbers of lawyers experiencing excessive stress, burnout, anxiety, depression, and often-related chemical and alcohol dependence. We must do more to foster an environment in which those who take up the mantle of serving as lawyers are not destroyed by their careers. I will work to raise awareness and help provide resources to assist Wisconsin-licensed lawyers in dealing with the many stresses of a legal career.

WISCONSIN FACES CRITICAL CHALLENGES IN MEETING THE NEEDS OF UNDERREPRESENTED COMMUNITIES

Another common challenge is the increasingly dire shortage of lawyers in places where they are needed most, including greater Wisconsin, criminal lawyers, and lawyers serving those who cannot afford legal services. The State Bar should be a force to help us meet these crises head on. Important to that fight will be the responsible use of emerging tools like AI, remote-work, and automation platforms that improve efficiency, ease the everyday grind, and allow us to focus on critical thinking and problem-solving. My role if elected will be to listen, help develop and direct resources, and build partnerships that can address these challenges long after my term is over.

Please vote!

**Thank you for considering my candidacy.
Regardless of your choice, please vote when ballots
are distributed between April 11-26, 2024.**

Vote for Ryan Billings

RYAN'S PRIORITIES ARE:

- To serve and provide meaningful value to all Wisconsin-licensed lawyers, regardless of background, practice area, firm-size, or location;
- To support lawyers' well-being and promote good mental and physical health practices; and
- To assist and enable lawyers who serve clients in underrepresented communities, including greater Wisconsin, prosecution and defense attorneys, and clients who cannot afford legal services.

Ryan Billings is a Shareholder and Chair of Litigation at Kohner, Mann & Kailas, S.C. He maintains a commercial litigation practice across a broad spectrum of subject-matters, but with a particular focus on non-compete, fiduciary duty, and trade secret law. A native of Sheboygan, Ryan began his practice in New York before returning home in 2011—his only regret is not coming home sooner!

Ryan has lectured and written extensively on emerging discovery law and practices, including for the Wisconsin Lawyer, the Wisconsin Law Journal, serving for nearly a decade as a co-editor of the Electronic Discovery Law chapter of Wisconsin Discovery Law and Practice, and teaching CLEs on discovery law. For many years, Ryan has been a member of the Board of Governors representing District 2. He is the Chair of the BOG's Policy Committee, a member of its Executive Committee, the BOG liaison to the Business Law Section, and the BOG representative to the Judicial Council.

Over the past two decades, Ryan has represented clients all over the world. He has submitted multiple briefs to the U.S. Supreme Court and has briefed or argued appeals in five different U.S. Courts of Appeal, as well as the Wisconsin Supreme Court and the New York Court of Appeals. He regularly represents clients in mission-critical disputes, in everything from ten-figure lawsuits to pro-bono cases in which the charity in question could not survive a loss in court. Ryan's experience representing clients nationally and internationally in a wide variety of settings has honed his diverse practice skills and deepened his understanding of the many types of resources and methods employed by lawyers in different legal communities to meet client needs.

Upon moving back to Wisconsin, Ryan met his now wife, Megan (again, should have done it sooner!), who is a historical fantasy and mystery novelist. They spend much of their free time with the people, shops, and beautiful parks of Cedarburg, where they have lived since 2018. A member of the National Eagle Scout Association, Ryan and his wife also enjoy camping all over Wisconsin every chance they get (Ryan proposed during one such camping trip). Megan's love of fishing (especially ice-fishing) further drives them to explore Wisconsin, scouting for the best spot. Their favorite is a lake whose location is being withheld, but may or may not be near the home of Ryan's mom, a bit outside Eagle River.



EDUCATION:

2001: B.A. in Philosophy from Princeton University

2004: Juris Doctorate from Harvard Law School

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:

CURRENT: Shareholder & Litigation Chair, Kohner, Mann & Kailas, S.C.

FORMER: Broad civil litigation background with firms of all sizes

STATE BAR LEADERSHIP:

- Chair of the Policy Committee
- Member of the Executive Committee
- Board of Governors (District 2)
- BOG representative to the Judicial Council
- BOG liaison to the Business Law Section

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS:

- Thomas E. Fairchild Inn of Court
- Fellow of the American Bar Foundation