



SHAREHOLDER

## Christopher A. Merritt



(248) 970-7027

cmerritt@zausmer.com

Clients trust Chris Merritt to help them navigate their most complicated projects and legal challenges.

Chris has more than 15 years of experience representing governmental entities, businesses, and individuals in a wide variety of commercial matters and disputes. Clients count on Chris to develop practical solutions to their real-world problems, and he takes great pride in providing lasting value to his clients – whether through completed projects, negotiated transactions, or hard-fought court victories.

On any given day, Chris provides advice and counsel to clients on:

- Project planning and management;
- Design and construction disputes;
- Procurement strategy and contract negotiations;
- Budgeting and funding issues;
- Risk management;
- Licensing and permitting concerns;
- Business disputes;
- Environmental matters;
- Operational planning;
- Policy and compliance issues;
- Employment matters;
- Internal and external investigations; and
- Corporate governance.

A recent example of Chris's ability to guide clients through complicated matters is his wide-ranging representation of Wayne County in the development and activation of its new Criminal Justice Center – a \$650+ million public-private construction project scheduled to be completed in 2024. A project of this size and complexity requires continuous interaction between multiple stakeholders and various consultants, contractors, and professionals, as well as the coordination and resolution of countless business and legal issues. Wayne County relies on Chris to oversee and manage these issues on a daily basis, and it is deeply gratifying for him to play such an integral role in helping his client complete a project that will vastly improve Wayne County for decades to come.

More than just an advocate, Chris works closely with his clients to truly understand all aspects of their operations and objectives, so strategies and solutions are tailored to their unique needs. For those matters where a business solution is not possible, Chris is an experienced and accomplished litigator. His exhaustive and meticulous preparation, writing skills, and ability to distill complex issues into concise legal arguments frequently lead to favorable results for his clients – both as plaintiffs and defendants.

Chris's litigation work includes recovering millions of dollars for lenders and governmental agencies in mortgage fraud-related cases and setting legal precedent for loss recovery in Michigan. Some of Chris's other recent cases include:

Representing a plaintiff in a breach of contract case seeking damages in the form of lost profits that resulted in a \$2.4 million settlement;

Representing a director of a Delaware corporation in extensive litigation that resulted in the client taking control of the company;

Representing an automotive supplier in a trial that resulted in a \$565,000 judgment against defendants for intentional interference with business relations;

Defending an insurance plan against a breach of contract case filed by an employer with claimed damages exceeding \$15 million that resulted in a \$0 dismissal with prejudice; and

Defending an environmental company against a \$500,000 professional negligence claim that resulted in summary disposition on the merits in favor of the client.

Chris earned his undergraduate degree in psychology with honors from Michigan State University, and attended Michigan State University College of Law, where he graduated in the top three percent of his class and was a member of the Law Review. Chris enjoys traveling with his family and watching his three kids participate in various sporting activities.



**FARMINGTON HILLS**

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**PRACTICE AREAS**

Appellate  
Automotive Industry  
Business & Commercial Litigation  
Construction  
Employment & Labor  
Environmental Law  
Municipal Law  
Real Property

**EDUCATION**

**Michigan State University College of Law,**  
Juris Doctor, *summa cum laude*, 2007  
Dean Charles H. King Scholarship Recipient  
Member, Michigan State *Law Review*

**Michigan State University,**  
Bachelor of Arts in Psychology, *with honors*, 2003

**BAR ADMISSIONS**

State of Illinois  
State of Michigan  
U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan  
U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois

**PROFESSIONAL GROUPS**

State Bar of Michigan



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