



Maritime & Admiralty

Winston's Maritime & Admiralty team understands the challenges involved in doing business and navigating the maritime industry's complex issues. Having represented a diverse mix of industry participants—from vessel owners and operators, businesses that charter vessels, and port authorities to others engaged in the financing of maritime-transportation assets—we have gained a deep understanding of the most important issues our clients face. While we are nationally recognized as a leading firm for difficult maritime problems involving U.S.-government policy, law, regulations, and enforcement, we also are actively involved in assisting clients with vessel financing, commercial transactions, and non-government-related admiralty litigation, including collisions, allisions, and cargo claims, among others.

We have extensive experience dealing with the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG), U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP), Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), U.S. Maritime Administration, U.S. Transportation Command, and Military Sealift Command. In addition, our maritime attorneys are supported by the full resources of the firm, including our Transactions, Restructuring, Environmental, Tax, Litigation, Labor & Employment, and Energy Practices.

For updates related to current maritime legal issues and developments—including environmental regulation and crimes, piracy, the Jones Act, USCG initiatives, and U.S. congressional enactments—visit our maritime blog, [MaritimeFedWatch](#).

Key Contacts

[Charlie Papavizas](#)

Areas of Focus

Maritime Litigation

Our attorneys are skilled litigators who understand the unique challenges confronting the maritime industry. We have appeared before numerous federal district and appellate courts and federal agencies, including the Federal Maritime Commission, Government Accountability Office, U.S. Court of Federal Claims, USCG, U.S. Maritime Administration, CPB, DOJ, and U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT). Backed by the full strength of the firm's more than 450 litigators, our maritime litigators represent companies in critical matters, including defending against business-critical claims, prosecuting vital rights in both civil and administrative matters, and defending white-collar criminal matters.

In London, our disputes team has acted on various maritime-related disputes, including charterparty disputes, claims against insurers, and commercial contract disputes. We have experience in both court-related matters, including winning an important anti-suit injunction in a cross-border charterparty dispute, and international arbitrations, including London Maritime Arbitrators Association (LMAA) arbitrations.

International Trade

We are active in international trade issues affecting the maritime industry, including General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), USMCA, and the World Trade Organization's Maritime Transport Services negotiations. We routinely advise clients concerning export control issues, Jones Act compliance, issues relating to the U.S.-flag vessel trading restrictions, and vessel repair duties. We regularly deal with the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative, DOT, the Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) in the Treasury Department, the Commerce Department, and CBP.

[Learn More](#)

Offshore Wind/Jones Act

Winston offers a combination of leading energy, transactional, and litigation capabilities with a first-tier Maritime & Admiralty Practice—an offering that uniquely positions our firm at the forefront of developments in offshore wind in the U.S. We are the first law firm to obtain an offshore wind-related ruling from the U.S. government.

Additionally, we are lauded as a leading law firm on Jones Act issues. Our lawyers have extensive experience regarding the application of Jones Act laws to cargo, passenger, and vessel movements and investments in U.S. companies, and regularly provide advocacy on behalf of maritime clients before various federal agencies, including the USCG, CBP, U.S. Maritime Administration, and Congress.

Government Contracts

We have a market-leading Government Contracts Practice. Our lawyers are well versed in all aspects of U.S.-government contracting at the federal, state, and local levels. We have successfully represented both large and small businesses in the maritime and logistics industry.

We offer lawyers skilled in the intricacies of the rules and procedures that govern federal contracts. Our team's experience extends to all phases of the procurement process, including pre- and post-award counseling, bid protests, dispute resolution, defense against charges brought by the government, and legislative matters.

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Transactions

Our attorneys have substantial experience assisting U.S. and non-U.S. entities in various vessel-related transactions, including Jones Act financing, foreign investments in Jones Act vessels and companies, vessel finance involving the U.S. government's Title XI guarantee, and Capital Construction Fund programs.

Over the past three years, we have negotiated numerous ship construction contracts, ship management agreements, vessel charters and other leasing arrangements, loan agreements, vessel mortgages, vessel sale contracts, and other agreements. We also assist non-U.S. lenders in transactions involving U.S.-flag vessels. Moreover, our attorneys regularly advise clients in connection with equity and debt issues, including IPOs and other offerings involving senior and subordinated debt and equity hybrids.

Regulatory & Legislative

For the past 40 years, our attorneys have obtained successful legislative results for our maritime clients and have represented clients in connection with virtually every type of maritime-related legislative issue, including the Jones Act, maritime security, cargo preference, oil pollution, vessel documentation and ship mortgage changes, as well as those including the U.S. Navy, USCG, and U.S. Maritime Administration funding. We also provide counseling and bill analysis, congressional lobbying, executive branch advocacy on policy questions, legislative drafting, and preparation and presentation of congressional testimony.

On the regulatory front, we have experience with the complex U.S. laws, international treaties, and regulations affecting coastal and international maritime shipping, including the various U.S. shipping and merchant marine acts, International Maritime Organization (IMO) regulations, USCG port state control regulations, and the various exceptions to the U.S. coastwise laws. Our attorneys also have extensive experience in advocacy on behalf of maritime clients before various federal agencies and in court. Our practice works closely with the firm's government relations attorneys and advisors who have held major positions with national trade associations, congressional committees, and congressional leaders.

Environmental & Energy Compliance & Counseling

We have decades of first-hand experience in maritime environmental compliance, including civil and criminal matters relating to pollution from vessels, internal corporate compliance investigations and due diligence, and dealing with enforcement authorities. We have counseled many businesses on environmental compliance matters—including vessel owners—regarding compliance with the Oil Pollution Act of 1990, the Clean Water Act, the Ocean Dumping Act, the Act to Prevent Pollution from Ships/MARPOL, the Clean Air Act, the Refuse Act, and other environmental statutes and related regulations.

Our team has also represented vessel owners responding to government enforcement actions. We also are involved in a significant number of industry-changing counseling activities, including internal environmental audits and compliance investigations, the development of environmental handbooks and other corporate compliance materials, and strategic planning for environmental compliance.

Maritime Insolvency

We regularly assist maritime clients in virtually every type of relevant restructuring or insolvency legal matter, including workouts, restructurings, and Chapter 11 cases. We have considerable experience handling vessel loan workouts and representing lenders and creditors in insolvency situations.

Related Capabilities

Finance

Environmental

International Trade

Litigation/Trials

Mergers & Acquisitions

Restructuring & Insolvency

Energy

Energy Transition

Resources

[MaritimeFedWatch](#)

Related Insights & News

BLOG

United States Imposes Substantial Fees on Chinese-Built and Other Vessels

APRIL 18, 2025

BLOG

Ground-Breaking U.S. Merchant Marine Executive Order Issued

APRIL 10, 2025

ARTICLE

Window on Washington:
SHIPS Shape

FIRST QUARTER 2025

BLOG

U.S. Government Proposes Trade Sanctions Against Chinese-Built or -Operated Vessels

FEBRUARY 24, 2025

IN THE MEDIA

Charlie Papavizas Featured in *Seatrade Maritime* After Discussing Maritime Policy History at Society of Maritime Arbitrators Luncheon

FEBRUARY 7, 2025

IN THE MEDIA

Charlie Papavizas Quoted in *TradeWinds* Article Discussing the Future of U.S. Shipbuilding in a Chinese-Dominated Industry

FEBRUARY 5, 2025

IN THE MEDIA

Charlie Papavizas Discusses Potential Effects of the SHIPS for America Act of

BLOG

SHIPS for America Act – A Retrospective

DECEMBER 19, 2024

ARTICLE

Window on Washington: Dealing with Dr. OSRA

FOURTH QUARTER 2024

IN THE MEDIA

Charlie Papavizas Book *Journey to the Jones Act* Reviewed by *The Waterways Journal*

DECEMBER 12, 2024

IN THE MEDIA

Charlie Papavizas Discusses Second Trump Administration's Effects on the Breakbulk Sector with *Journal of Commerce*

NOVEMBER 13, 2024

RECOGNITIONS

Winston Merits 98 Tier 1 Rankings in the 2025 Edition of Best Law Firms®

NOVEMBER 7, 2024