

TYPES NOT MAPPED YET January 20, 2022 | TTR not mapped yet | Katie E. Kraft

Katie Kraft rejoins Thompson Coburn to co-chair national Public Transit practice

Thompson Coburn is pleased to announce that [Katie Kraft](#) has rejoined the Firm as a partner in our Washington, D.C., office, where she will co-chair our national Public Transit practice. Katie returns to Thompson Coburn from the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA), where since 2019 she served as Vice President and Deputy General Counsel for the third largest heavy rail transit and sixth largest bus system in the United States.

“We’re absolutely delighted to welcome Katie back to Thompson Coburn, where she started her legal career and developed extensive experience in the complex regulations and law governing transit systems,” said [Jane Sutter Starke](#), co-chair of the Firm’s Public Transit practice. “Her broad legal skills, combined with her strong client-first philosophy, make her a fantastic advocate for public transit agencies. Katie has seen first-hand the issues and challenges transit agencies face, and that adds tremendous value for our clients across the country.”

Katie advises public transit agencies on a variety of regulatory and compliance issues, including public sector procurement, project delivery, Buy America compliance, safety oversight, and Section 13(c) labor protection.

Katie also practices before federal courts, private arbitrators, and administrative bodies. She represented the State of California in its successful challenge to the U.S. Department of Labor’s denial of Section 13(c) certification to California transit agencies based on the State’s enactment of pension reform legislation. She also represented a cruise line association in testing local municipal passenger fees against the limits on such fees set by the Tonnage Clause of the U.S. Constitution. On six occasions, Katie co-authored U.S. Supreme Court briefs on constitutional issues affecting transportation clients.

In her time as Deputy General Counsel of WMATA, Katie oversaw a team of 13 in-house attorneys providing legal advice and counsel to a transit agency with more than 12,000 employees, a \$4.7 billion budget, and a capital improvement program with six-year investments totaling \$12.3 billion. Katie and her team handled legal issues from every business area of the agency, including procurement, capital project delivery, labor and employment, ethics, safety and environment, occupational health, and customer service.

Katie also served as a key member of WMATA’s senior management team as the agency faced unprecedented challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic, including ensuring the health and safety of Metro customers and employees while providing transit services for essential workers throughout the national capital region.

“I learned so much from my colleagues and legal team at WMATA,” said Katie. “Together we confronted and worked through incredibly challenging issues wrought by the pandemic, always keeping our customers and employees front of mind. We also tackled regulatory issues familiar to many transit agencies while taking into account the unique challenges of operating public transit in the nation’s capital. Today, I look forward to collaborating again with the wonderful attorneys and staff of Thompson Coburn and applying my in-house experience to our work for public transit agencies across the country.”

Katie earned her law degree and a B.A. in English, with honors, from Saint Louis University.

She is the 2022 president of WTS-DC, the Washington, D.C. chapter of WTS International, an organization dedicated to creating a more diverse, inclusive, and equitable transportation industry through the global advancement of women. Katie is also active in the American Public Transportation Association and the Transportation Research Board, where she serves as a member of the Standing Committee on Transit and Intermodal Transportation Law.



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