



William A. Spence

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Areas of Practice

Arbitration | Litigation/Trial Practice

William Spence is Of Counsel in the Litigation Practice of Smith, Gambrell & Russell, LLP. Mr. Spence was Senior Counsel at Freeborn & Peters, which combined with SGR in 2023.

Mr. Spence has been traveling to China since 1987. He lived in Shanghai with his family in 1994 while he taught law at the East China Law School, and has represented some of China's largest corporations in litigation and arbitration matters.

Mr. Spence has conducted arbitrations in Hong Kong and large litigated matters in the United States District Courts on behalf of large Chinese state-owned enterprises. He also represents U.S. companies doing business in China. He has presented to several Chinese government agencies about various aspects of American law. Between 1995 and 1998, he was one of two foreign advisors to the State Pharmaceutical Administration of China and, in 1998, was appointed counsel to the Dalian High Tech Industrial Zone. Bill was appointed co-chairman of the Sister Cities China Committee by Mayor Daley in 1997 and has led several business delegations on more than 40 trips to China.

Mr. Spence and the Firm have assisted in the training of Chinese lawyers through their participation in the China International Lawyers Training Center in association with the East China University of Politics and Law in Shanghai. He was a founder of the China Roundtable within the Chicago Council on Global Affairs. He has given numerous presentations of legal issues related to China and has spoken at the World Economic Forum China Summit in Beijing on "Rule of Law" related issues and at the Aspen Institute seminar on Globalization and Asian Values.

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Mr. Spence is Co-Chairman of the Chicago Sister Cities China Committee, was a founding member of the board and president pro temp of the Chicago China Economic Development Center, a member of the Chinatown Museum Advisory Board, the Chinese American Service League Advisory Board, and was a member of the study group which produced, *The Global Edge: An Agenda For Chicago's Future*. He is the author of "A Practitioners View of Chinese Legal Developments," *Loyola University Chicago International Law Review* Volume 3, Issue 2 (Spring/Summer 2006) 157-164.

Mr. Spence was a law clerk to the Hon. Robert E. English, on the Illinois Appellate Court and served for eight years as an Assistant U.S. Attorney in the Northern District of Illinois, where he won 29 of 31 cases, 22 of which were before juries.

Mr. Spence earned his B.A. from Northwestern University, and his J.D. from Loyola University Chicago School of Law, where he was a member of *The National Moot Court Team*.

Admissions

Illinois

Memberships

Chinatown Museum Advisory Board
The Chinese American Service League Advisory Board
American Bar Association
Chicago Bar Association
Federal Court Trial Bar

Recognitions

Martindale-Hubbell legal ability/ethical standards rating ("A-V") - Highest possible rating