

Stephen S. LaPlante

SERVICE AREAS

Business

- Automotive
- Bankruptcy, Restructuring + Insolvency
- Finance
 - Restructure, Enforcement, Insolvency + Bankruptcy

EDUCATION

- Wayne State University Law School, J.D.
- University of Michigan, B.B.A.
- Northwestern Michigan College, A.A.S.

BAR ADMISSIONS

- Michigan

COURT ADMISSIONS

U.S. Court of Appeals

- Sixth Circuit

U.S. District Courts

- Eastern District of Michigan
- Western District of Michigan



Principal

Detroit

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Stephen S. LaPlante has been extensively involved in virtually every auto industry-related bankruptcy case in the United States and Canada in the past decade, representing the interests of a large American automobile manufacturer and several Tier 1 automotive parts suppliers. His goal in every case is to keep the automobile assembly lines running in an environment where contracts are exclusive with each supplier as the sole-source of component parts under the just-in-time inventory management model. Coping with the issues arising in a customer relationship with a financially troubled auto parts supplier has become increasingly challenging in this rapidly changing industry, calling for new, innovative solutions. The automobile business is unlike any other and experience is essential to avoid potentially catastrophic consequences. Stephen brings that experience to bear on each case.

"Effective legal counseling requires a relationship with the client – to identify with and understand the client in order to really learn what it needs to achieve and find the potential paths to a practical solution."

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EXPERIENCE

Stephen recently guided one client through the bankruptcy litigation process, recovering over two-thirds of a multi-million dollar claim while eliminating litigation claims against the client of over \$200 million. Usually, his successes are measured not in dollars recovered but rather in avoiding untold millions of dollars of damages that would be suffered in the event automobile assembly lines are halted through the failure of a parts supplier. In every case, he seeks to negotiate a reasonable, cost-effective solution.

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Most cases require Stephen to address challenges in funding ongoing operations, fostering cooperation with labor and management, managing vendor and creditor relationships, addressing the concerns of ownership and lenders, dealing with property and tooling issues and the rehabilitation, sale or winding up of the supplier. In all cases, he must rely on his industry experience to find workable solutions.

"There is always a fair solution, but sometimes it takes looking at the problem from a new perspective and developing a previously untried approach, remaining focused on what we really need to accomplish to further the client's goals. This means knowing the objectives and motives of the other parties, as well, and that is where experience and an understanding of the automotive industry is invaluable."

PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

- American Bar Association
- State Bar of Michigan
- Federal Bar Association
- American Bankruptcy Institute

HONORS + AWARDS

- Strathmore's Who's Who, 2002
- Michigan Super Lawyers, Bankruptcy & Creditor/Debtor Rights/Insolvency and Reorganization Law-2006-present
- Best Lawyers in America, Bankruptcy and Creditor-Debtor Rights Law 2009-present

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

- Adjunct Professor of Law, Wayne State University Law School
- Instructor, "Trial Advocacy Program: Enhancing Your Skills with Expert and Lay Testimony," The Federal Bar Association-Eastern District Chapter of Michigan and the Debtor Creditor Law Section of the Detroit Metropolitan Bar Association, 1998

PUBLICATIONS

"Enforcing Judgments and Debts," West Group Michigan Practice Guide, co-author with Judge James D. Gregg and Linda C. Scheuerman, J.D., (2000)

"Enforceability of Prepayment Penalty Provisions in Michigan," in Bankruptcy and Out, the Michigan Business Law Journal, Volume XVI, Issue No. 4, Page 7 (1995)

SPEECHES

"Auto Cases: Where Is This Road Going?" American Bankruptcy Institute's 13th Annual Central States Bankruptcy Workshop, June 16-18, 2006

"Successful Judgment Collections in Michigan," seminar materials prepared for the National Business Institute, co-authored with Linda C. Scheuerman, J.D. (1994)

Instructor, "Trial Advocacy Program: Enhancing Your Skills with Expert and Lay Testimony," The Federal Bar Association-Eastern District Chapter of Michigan and the Debtor Creditor Law Section of the Detroit Metropolitan Bar Association, 1998

ARTICLES

- Automotive Guide