



## M. Gray Styers Jr.

Partner

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Wherever business strategy intersects with government regulation and public policy issues, Gray assists clients in navigating the political and legal environments to achieve their objectives.

He serves as Co-Chair of Fox Rothschild's Energy & Natural Resources Practice Group.

Gray practices in the areas of regulatory and administrative law, energy/utilities law, zoning/land use, government relations and large infrastructure matters. He represents numerous energy, telecommunications and project development clients before state government agencies, permitting officials and local zoning boards as well as in appeals to both state and federal courts. He has served as regulatory counsel for renewable energy facilities, two natural gas distribution companies as well as municipal natural gas systems, advises independent power producers and major wireless telecommunications service providers and handles zoning and permitting for large commercial and residential developments and infrastructure projects. In addition, Gray has negotiated and drafted power purchase agreements, full requirements contracts and energy supply agreements for wholesale and large retail energy customers. Gray is a "Utilities Law Specialist" as recognized by, and meeting the criteria of, the North Carolina State Bar Board of Legal Specialization.

### Services

- Environmental
- Corporate
- Infrastructure & Development
- Energy & Natural Resources
- Energy Regulation & Compliance
- Manufacturing
- Retail Industry
- Renewable Energy & Project Development
- Zoning & Land Use
- Environmental, Social & Governance (ESG)
- Real Estate

### Before Fox Rothschild

Gray was a partner and Infrastructure and Development Practice Area Leader at Smith Moore Leatherwood LLP, which combined with Fox Rothschild in 2018. Gray began his legal career as a judicial clerk for Chief Judge Sam J. Ervin III on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit.

## Beyond Fox Rothschild

Gray is active in his community and the profession. He currently serves on the Board of the North Carolina Symphony Society and has chaired the North Carolina Museum of History Associates and the Wake County Industrial and Pollution Control Facilities Financing Authority. He has been a member of the Board of Visitors of Wake Forest University's School of Divinity since 2012. He has also served on the Government Affairs Board for the Greater Raleigh Chamber of Commerce and is active in the Rotary Club and First Moravian Church in Greensboro, where he manages a community garden.

In 2014, he was elected to serve as President of the Wake County Bar Association (2,200+ members) and the Tenth Judicial District Bar (5,000+ members).

## Bar Admissions

- North Carolina

## Court Admissions

- U.S. Supreme Court
- U.S. Court of Appeals, Fourth Circuit
- U.S. District Court, Eastern District of North Carolina
- U.S. District Court, Middle District of North Carolina
- U.S. District Court, Western District of North Carolina

## Education

- University of North Carolina School of Law (J.D., *with honors*, 1989)
- University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (M.B.A., 1989)
- Wake Forest University (B.A., *magna cum laude*, 1985)
  - Political Science

## Memberships

- Wake County Bar Association and Tenth Judicial District Bar
  - President (2014)
  - Board of Directors (2006-2008)
  - President's Award of Excellence (2007, 2011)
- North Carolina Bar Association
  - Board of Governors (2006-2010)
  - Administrative Law Section Council (2000-2003; Chair, 2002-2003)
  - Litigation Section Council (1995-1998)
  - CLE Committee (1997-06; Chair, 2004-2006)
- North Carolina State Bar
  - Ethics Committee (Advisory Member, 2000-2002)
  - Authorized Practice Committee (Advisory Member, 2002-03)
- UNC School of Law
  - Law Alumni Association Board of Directors (2007-2013)
  - UNC Law Foundation, Inc. Board of Directors (1995-2007)
  - Adjunct Professor (2003-2005)
- Inns of Court, Chief Justice Susie Sharpe Chapter (2000-2021)
- Greensboro Bar Association

## Board of Directors

- North Carolina Symphony Society, Inc.
- North Carolina Museum of History Associates, Inc.
- Laurel Ridge Camp, Conference & Retreat Center

## Honors & Awards

- Selected to the list of attorneys ranked by *Chambers USA* for Energy & Natural Resources in North Carolina (2023-2025)
- North Carolina Pro Bono Honor Society (2017)
- North Carolina State Bar Board of Legal Specialization "Utilities Law Specialist" (2016)
- North Carolina Bar Association's Citizen Lawyer Award (2013)
- *North Carolina Lawyers Weekly* "Leaders in the Law" (2016)
- Selected to the "Lawyer of the Year" list for Litigation - Land Use and Zoning (2012, 2016, 2019, 2020) and Energy Law (2014, 2017, 2023, 2025) in Raleigh, NC by *Best Lawyers*
- Selected to the "Best Lawyers in America" list for Energy Law and Land Use & Zoning Law (2007-2026) and Litigation-Land Use & Zoning (2011-2026) in Raleigh, NC by *Best Lawyers*
- North Carolina *Super Lawyers*, Listed Utilities Law (2006, 2009-2021)
- Rated AV Preeminent™ by Martindale-Hubbell®
- Recognized by the *Triangle Business Journal* as a "40 Under 40" Leader (2002)

## Representative Work

### Energy

- Regulatory approvals for new renewable energy facilities
- Special electric service contracts and energy supply agreements for large electric energy customers
- Purchase Power Agreement (PPA) and Renewable Energy Certificates (RECs) Agreements for new renewable energy facilities
- Litigation of contested terms of PPA under Public Utility Regulatory Policy Act (PURPA) before state utilities commission
- Ongoing regulatory compliance for natural gas local distribution companies
- Organization of and general counsel to Carolinas Public Gas Association
- Defense of multiple challenges to construction of 43-mile natural gas transmission pipeline
- Representation of regional transmission organization

### Land Use/Zoning

- Local government permits for 1600-acre master-planned, mixed use development
- Settlement of multi-year litigation regarding controversial non-conforming mining use
- Permits for hundreds of wireless telecommunications facilities and networks across multiple jurisdictions
- Appeals for judicial review of denials of land use permits
- Conditional rezonings for various commercial real estate projects
- Variances to accommodate property hardships

### Administrative Law (Other)

- Contested Case Hearings and appeals of regulatory enforcement actions to Office of Administrative Hearings
- Contested hearings before professional licensing boards and agencies
- Complaint proceedings before the North Carolina Utilities Commission
- Litigation of scope of municipal utility authority and governance structure
- Public-private partnership for construction of new road/bypass