

NEWS & INSIGHTS

BRANDON ESSIG AND MARY PARRISH MCCrackEN SECURE REGULATORY WIN FOR COINBASE AS ALABAMA DROPS ENFORCEMENT ACTION

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Lightfoot Franklin & White LLC partner **Brandon K. Essig** and associate **Mary Parrish McCracken** secured a key regulatory win for cryptocurrency exchange Coinbase in an administrative enforcement matter before the Alabama Securities Commission (ASC).

On April 25, 2025, the ASC rescinded a prior show-cause order regarding Coinbase's staking program, which allows crypto holders to earn rewards for locking up their assets for a set period to help support the operation and security of a blockchain network. The staking program has been the subject of coordinated enforcement efforts by multiple states. Alabama is now the fifth state to end its action, following the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission's (SEC's) voluntary dismissal of similar claims earlier this year.

In its consent order, the ASC cited ongoing federal regulatory developments and the formation of the SEC's Crypto Task Force as key reasons for stepping back, stating "it would be most efficient, appropriate and in the best interests of justice to rescind the pending show-cause order."

Law360 covered the consent order in a **recent article**, with Coinbase's chief legal officer Paul Grewa, describing the outcome as "a win for customers, innovation and economic opportunity."

Essig and McCracken represented Coinbase in the matter, working closely with Coinbase and its national counsel at Sullivan & Cromwell to achieve a resolution that supports a more unified federal approach to digital asset regulation.

A seasoned litigator and former Assistant U.S. Attorney, Essig maintains a robust civil, white-collar criminal defense and investigations practice. He has tried dozens of high-profile jury cases, and his courtroom experience includes civil and criminal trials in state and federal courts and multiple appellate arguments.

McCracken represents companies and individuals in high-stakes civil litigation and white-collar criminal defense cases. She has substantial experience advocating for executives and stakeholders through all phases of federal or state agency investigations, including high-profile U.S. Department of Justice criminal probes.