

COMPLEX GOVERNMENT LITIGATION & INVESTIGATIONS

Lightfoot offers a multidisciplinary team to help governments of all sizes navigate complex matters.

Just like companies, governments often find themselves in disputes or managing sensitive situations requiring the insight of experienced lawyers. Unlike corporations, however, elected officials and government-personnel have unique political implications to consider, including their accountability to taxpayers for any government action or spending. Any complex legal issue involving a government demands careful handling, along with an efficient and cost-effective resolution.

The members of Lightfoot's Complex Government Litigation & Investigations practice group have spent their careers representing corporate clients in court, and they leverage that experience on behalf of governments of all sizes. Whether a government is involved in a dispute with another state over natural resources, going after a polluter for environmental contamination or seeking recovery from a contractor for deficiencies with a large infrastructure project, Lightfoot relentlessly pursues the best possible resolutions for elected leaders and the people they represent.

Some examples of the firm's work:

- Securing nearly \$90 million in a **settlement for the City of Jackson, Mississippi**, from Siemens, the multinational manufacturing conglomerate over a failed water meter and billing system. Lightfoot recovered the full cost of the project, and the settlement agreement allowed Jackson to retain other improvements.
- Representing the state of Alabama in a case to block appropriation of water rights by the state of Georgia. This involved handling the water rights negotiations with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the states of Georgia and Florida for more than 15 years.
- Developing a creative way to assist the City of Hattiesburg, Mississippi, in going after the historical polluters at an inactive industrial manufacturing site to **finally get it cleaned up and remediated**.

Powered by a team that understands the realities of local governments, the firm often works on a contingency basis for these cases and also enters into other alternative fee arrangements with clients. This allows government staff and elected officials to assure taxpayers that financial considerations are being taken into account.

In addition to representing governments in litigation, members of this practice also draw on their **corporate investigations experience** to provide guidance and leadership on sensitive matters. (For example, the firm **served as special counsel** to the Alabama House Judiciary Committee for the impeachment investigation of then-Governor Robert Bentley.) Members of the group have **advised municipalities** on handling independent reviews of police actions, and one of our lawyers also served as co-prosecutor in the judicial ethics trial of former Alabama Supreme Court Chief Justice Roy Moore.

Whether our role is as formal special counsel or we are engaged to provide advice, governments at all levels turn to Lightfoot's Complex Government Litigation & Investigations group for informed and experienced guidance.

EXPERIENCE

- Recovering \$90 Million for a Failed Municipal Water Meter and Billing System
- Using a Creative Approach to Solve a City's Environmental Contamination Problem
- Leading the impeachment investigation of Gov. Robert Bentley.
- Representing the state of Alabama in a case to block appropriation of water rights by the state of Georgia. This involved handling the water rights negotiations with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the states of Georgia and Florida for more than 15 years. It also involved working closely with Alabama's Department of Economic and Community Affairs, Department of Environmental Management, governor's office and attorney general's office.
- Assisting the City of Huntsville's Police Citizens Advisory Council in an independent investigation and evaluation of the circumstances surrounding interactions between demonstrators and the Huntsville Police Department during a series of protests.
- Defending the City of Birmingham, Alabama, in a public nuisance matter regarding renovation and reconstruction work on the Ramsay McCormack Building in Ensley.
- Representing the Commission of Jefferson County, Alabama in a Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) investigation.