HALL BOOTH SMITH, P.C.

bdrennon@hallboothsmith.com

Partner

501.319.6996

BIOGRAPHY | EXPERIENCE | CREDENTIALS | MEMBERSHIPS | RECOGNITION | PRESENTATIONS | IN THE PRESS

Biography

Baxter D. Drennon is the Managing Partner of Hall Booth Smith's Little Rock, Arkansas office. A seasoned trial attorney with nearly two decades of experience, Baxter serves as national trial counsel in high-exposure commercial litigation, products liability, medical malpractice defense, and banking and finance matters. He routinely handles cases involving eight-figure exposure and has tried approximately 25 cases, with 15 taken to verdict.

In 2025 alone, Baxter tried three eight-figure cases to verdict across three distinct practice areas — products liability, commercial litigation, and medical malpractice — securing two complete defense verdicts and a favorable verdict in an admitted-liability traumatic brain injury case in which the trial team reduced a $55 million demand to a $4.2 million verdict.

Baxter's practice reflects a dual focus: aggressive, prepared trial advocacy for clients facing catastrophic exposure, and strategic business counsel that aligns legal decisions with broader organizational objectives. He works closely with corporate leadership teams and in-house counsel to manage risk, resolve

Services

Construction

Corporate & Partnership

Insurance Coverage

Medical Malpractice

Products Liability

Professional Malpractice & Ethics

Strategic Teams

eDiscovery

National Trial Counsel

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complex disputes, and protect institutional interests — whether in the courtroom or at the negotiating table.

More +

Beyond the courtroom, Baxter works closely with each client's leadership team to ensure the legal strategy aligns with broader business goals while resolving each matter effectively and efficiently. He represents clients across various manufacturing sectors, including aerospace, automotive, heating and cooling, electrical component, and vertical transportation industries.

In addition to products liability defense, Baxter often advises businesses on commercial disputes and other day-to-day operational matters. He also represents several municipal water and wastewater entities. His noteworthy contributions include serving as legal counsel in the pioneering privatization of a water utility for a military installation in Arkansas, and his tenure as the City Attorney for Benton, Arkansas.

Baxter earned a Juris Doctor, *magna cum laude*, from the University of Arkansas and a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science at the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville.

Considered a leader among his peers, Baxter has been actively involved in the Defense Research Institute (DRI) since 2010, and previously served as the Chair of the Young Lawyers Committee. In 2019, Baxter was elected to the DRI Board of Directors in 2019 – the first young lawyer elected to the Board. Baxter is also a Future Leader in the Products Liability Advisory Council. He has been repeatedly named a "Rising Star" by Mid-South Super Lawyers.

Experience

Baxter has over a decade of legal experience, protecting the rights of clients inside the courtroom, as well as in their day-to-day business dealings. Baxter's influence spans high-exposure personal injury cases, complex business litigations, and beyond. His dedication to his clients is mirrored in his tireless defense of manufacturers, his strategic litigation in commercial disputes, and his commitment to achieving summary judgments in multimillion-dollar controversies.

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Commercial Litigation & Banking and Finance

Baxter represents businesses, financial institutions, and corporate clients in complex commercial disputes involving contractual enforcement, shareholder and partnership disputes, fiduciary duty claims, intellectual property, and regulatory compliance. He has particular depth in banking and finance matters, advising lenders and financial institutions on litigation strategy, regulatory risk, and transactional disputes. Baxter also counsels clients on real estate transactions and commercial regulatory matters, and has served as outside general counsel to businesses navigating day-to-day operational and litigation challenges.

Products Liability

Baxter defends manufacturers in high-stakes products liability litigation across a range of industries, including aerospace, automotive, electrical components, heating and cooling, and vertical transportation. He has served as lead defense counsel in numerous cases involving catastrophic injury and wrongful death.

Medical Malpractice Defense

Baxter defends physicians, nurses, hospitals, and other healthcare providers in medical malpractice litigation, including cases involving catastrophic injury, wrongful death, and complex causation issues. His 2025 trial record included trying an admitted-liability traumatic brain injury case to a $4.2 million verdict on a $55 million demand — demonstrating the kind of disciplined, case-specific trial preparation that defines his approach.

Additional Experience

Baxter serves as the elected City Attorney for Benton, Arkansas, and represents municipal water and wastewater entities, including serving as legal counsel in the pioneering privatization of a water utility for a military installation in Arkansas.

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Credentials

Admitted

U.S. Supreme Court, 2025

State Courts:

- Arkansas, 2010
- Georgia, 2022

U.S. District Courts:

- U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Arkansas
- U.S. District Court for the Western District of Arkansas
- U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Georgia
- U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Georgia
- U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Georgia

Education

- J.D., *magna cum laude*, University of Arkansas, 2010
- B.A., Political Science, University of Arkansas at Fayetteville, 2007

Memberships

- Arkansas Association of Defense Counsel: State Representative, 2023-2025; President, 2021-2022; President Elect, 2020-2021; Secretary, 2019-2020; Treasurer, 2018-2019
- Defense Research Institute:
  - Board of Directors: National Director, 2019-2022
  - National Membership Committee: Chair, 2021-2022
  - Young Lawyers Committee: Chair, 2018-2019
- Products Liability Advisory Council (PLAC)

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Recognition

- *The Best Lawyers in America®*, Best Lawyers®; 2021-2026
    - Awarded in: Mass Tort Litigation / Class Actions - Defendants, Personal Injury Litigation - Defendants, Product Liability Litigation - Defendants
- Mid-South Rising Star, Super Lawyers®, 2013-2023
- Richard H. Krochock Award, Defense Research Institute (DRI), 2022

Presentations

- **Psycholinguistic Framing: The Hidden Science of Winning Minds at Trial**
  Product Liability Advisory Council (PLAC) 2026 Spring Conference; March 26, 2026
- **Luddite or Technophile: Stark Warnings of Technology Competency**
  Products Liability Advisory Council (PLAC) 2023 Fall Conference; October 5. 2023
- **Modern Day Litigation: Using Multiple Media to Appeal to Jurors of All Ages**
  DRI, 2021 Annual Meeting, October 2021
- **An Afternoon in HR**
  HBS Helping Businesses Succeed Series; September 21, 2023
- **Lessons from the Trenches: Civil Jury Trials During COVID & Beyond**
  Products Liability Advisory Council, 2021 Fall Conference, September 2021

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- **Luddite or Technophile: Stark Warnings of Technology Competency Requirements**
  2021 Texas Association of Defense Counsel Annual Meeting, September 2021
- **Defusing the Nuclear Verdict**

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Products Liability Advisory Council, September 2021

- **Technology Competency Requirements in Tennessee and Nationwide**
  Tennessee Defense Lawyers Association, Virtual Annual Meeting & Awards Presentation, September 2020
- **Annual Case Law Update**
  DRI Product Liability Committee Meeting, November 2019
- **Legal Hot Topics**
  Arkansas Water and Wastewater Managers Association, 2018
- **The Ethical Pitfalls of Representing Friends and Family**
  Arkansas Association of Defense Counsel, Tennessee Association of Defense Counsel, Kentucky Defense Counsel, and Nebraska Association of Defense Counsel; April 2018
- **Luddite or Technophile: Start Warnings of Technology Competency Requirements**
  Arkansas Association of Defense Counsel, September 2017
- **The Ethical Pitfalls of Representing Friends and Family**
  DRI Lawyers' Professionalism and Ethics and Young Lawyers Committees, June 2016
- **Ethical Pitfalls of Representing Friends and Family**
  Arkansas Association of Defense Counsel, Tennessee Association of Defense Counsel, Kentucky Association of Defense Counsel, and Nebraska Association of Defense Counsel; June 2016
- **Ethics in Negotiations and Mediations**
  DRI Young Lawyers Seminar, June 2015

In the Press

HBS Attorneys Recognized in

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2024 Mid-South Super Lawyers Awards

November 21, 2024

HBS has been recognized for its outstanding legal work as 10 of its attorneys are selected to the 2024 Mid-South Super Lawyers and Rising Stars lists.

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58 HBS Attorneys Recognized as The Best Lawyers in America® Award Recipients

August 16, 2024

Hall Booth Smith, P.C. is pleased to announce that 58 lawyers have been included in the 2025 edition of The Best Lawyers in America®

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HBS Attorneys Recognized in 2023 Mid-South Super Lawyers Awards

November 28, 2023

HBS has been recognized for its outstanding legal work as 10 of its attorneys are selected to the 2023 Mid-South Super Lawyers and Rising Stars lists

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55 Hall Booth Smith Lawyers Recognized as 2024 Best Lawyers® Award Recipients

August 21, 2023

We’re pleased to announce that 55 lawyers have been included in the 2024 edition of The Best Lawyers in America®.

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American City & County: Baxter Drennon on ARPA Funds, Their Impact for Municipalities

February 1, 2023

In an article published on January 27, 2023, by American City & County magazine, Little Rock, Arkansas, partner Baxter D. Drennon offers guidance to municipalities surrounding the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) of 2021 and its economic impact. The $1.9 trillion package, which includes funding for states, local governments, and tribal nations in response to

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Non-Criminal Acts / Aiding and Abetting – Further

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Expansion of the Exceptions to the Protection of Lawful Commerce in Arms Act?

August 24, 2022

Written by: Baxter Drennon, Esq. The Protection of Lawful Commerce in Arms Act, 15 U.S.C. § 7901, protects licensed firearm and ammunition manufacturers and dealers from civil liability resulting from the criminal or unlawful misuse of a firearm or ammunition. There are six enumerated exceptions to the immunity created under the Act, including actions related to: (1)

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Hall Booth Smith Attorneys Honored by The Best

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Lawyers In America 2023

August 18, 2022

47 lawyers from the firm have been honored in the 2023 edition of The Best Lawyers in America.

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HBS Legal Trends: Baxter Drennon & Burt Hicks

July 19, 2022

The newest HBS Legal Trends podcast features HBS Little Rock Partner Baxter D. Drennon and Burt Hicks, President, Chief Strategy Officer & General Counsel at Encore Bank. The pair discussed discussed company operating philosophy, how Encore Bank chooses new markets and the banking professionals who lead them, their focus on the latest in financial technology,

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HBS Adds Baxter Drennon as Partner in Little Rock, Arkansas

November 29, 2021

LITTLE ROCK, ARK. – NOV. 29, 2021 – Hall Booth Smith, P.C. is delighted to announce that seasoned trial attorney Baxter D. Drennon is joining the firm as a Partner in the recently opened office in Little Rock, Arkansas. Baxter has more than a decade of legal experience, and he specializes in complex litigation and

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