

# Former senior DHS official strengthens Nixon Peabody's National Security and Resilience practice

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## CONTACT

**Nicholas Braude**

Media Relations Director



Mobile +1 617.838.0727



[nbraude@nixonpeabody.com](mailto:nbraude@nixonpeabody.com)

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**Washington, DC.** Nixon Peabody LLP is pleased to announce that **Joseph B. Maher**, a longtime senior official and former Acting General Counsel of the US Department of Homeland Security (DHS), has joined the international law firm as partner, based in the **Washington, DC, office**.

During his more than 20 years of government service, Joe served in a variety of senior roles at DHS, the third-largest Cabinet department, including as Acting General Counsel, Principal Deputy General Counsel, and as the Chief Intelligence Officer and Associate General Counsel for Regulatory and Legislative Affairs. In these positions, Joe advised the Secretary and other senior officials on all legal aspects of the department's security and enforcement operations. He has extensive experience advising on a wide array of national security and homeland security matters, including cybersecurity, intelligence, international trade, border security, cross-border risks, aviation and rail security, immigration, national disasters, trade-related sanctions enforcement, and regulation of the nation's critical infrastructure. Joe also advised on high-profile internal and congressional investigations.

Joe also served as senior counsel to Vice Chair Liz Cheney on the US House of Representatives' Select Committee to Investigate the January 6th Attack on the US Capitol. He played a key role in developing investigative and litigation strategy, conducting interviews, and preparing for public hearings.

Joe's arrival underscores the strength of Nixon Peabody's **National Security and Resilience practice**, which now includes three professionals who have served in roles that include the Acting General Counsel of DHS, the Acting Director of US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), the Chief Intelligence Officer at DHS, and the Chief of the National Security



Division at the US Attorney's Office in Los Angeles, among other former senior officials and agents from federal government departments and agencies.

Nixon Peabody's National Security and Resilience practice is part of the firm's wider **Government Investigations & White-Collar Defense practice**, which itself includes several additional prominent former federal and state prosecutors.

"Joe is a distinguished and highly respected leader in the national security space," said **Robert Fisher**, leader of Nixon Peabody's Government Investigations & White-Collar Defense practice. "His many years handling complex national security issues for DHS provide him with the experience and insight that will be an immediate asset to the firm and our clients."

In 2021, the President awarded Joe the Presidential Rank Award (Distinguished Rank). The Secretary of Homeland Security recently awarded Joe the Distinguished Service Medal, and prior Secretaries twice awarded him the Secretary's Meritorious Service Silver Medal for distinction in legal affairs.

"Joe led the Department of Homeland Security's legal affairs through three presidential administrations, and his sharp legal acumen earned the respect of all who worked with him," said National Security and Resilience partner **John Sandweg**, also a former Acting General Counsel of DHS and a former Acting Director of ICE. "He is a great addition to our practice and I look forward to working alongside Joe again."

"Joe is an excellent addition to the already noteworthy group of National Security and Government Investigations & White-Collar Defense attorneys in our office," said **Colette Dafoe**, managing partner of Nixon Peabody's Washington, DC, office. "National and homeland security intersect with so many different areas, Joe's experience will benefit several of our practices, both in DC and across the firm."

Having earned his JD from the University of Chicago Law School and his BS from Northwestern University, Joe also earned a Master of Laws degree focusing on International and National Security Law from Georgetown University Law Center.