

Samuel S. Olens

Partner



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Atlanta

D +1 404 527 4108

M +1 404 483 2477

samuel.olens@dentons.com

Overview

Samuel S. Olens is a partner in Dentons' Public Policy practice and is a member of the firm's State Attorneys General group, based in the Atlanta office. His practice focuses on state attorneys general and local government affairs matters.

Sam was twice elected attorney general of Georgia, in 2010 and 2014. In that role he worked to strengthen the penalties for and protect the victims of sex trafficking, guided a comprehensive revision of Georgia's sunshine laws and led the effort to stem the epidemic of prescription drug abuse. Olens also served as vice president of the National Association of Attorneys General in 2016, having previously served as chair of the 13-state Southern Region both in 2013 and 2015.

Prior to being elected attorney general, Olens was chairman of the Cobb County Board of Commissioners, serving from August 2002 through March 2010. He previously served as a county commissioner from 1999 through June 2002.

Sam was chair of the Atlanta Regional Commission board as well as a member of the Board of the Department of Community Affairs. Sam has a history of taking a regional approach to problem solving. During his time at the Atlanta Regional Commission, Sam Olens was awarded the Tom Bradley Leadership Award by the National Association of Regional Councils. The award recognizes leadership excellence an elected or appointed official has made in advocating regional concepts, approaches, and programs at any level of government.

Sam also served as Vice-Chair of the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District, a 16-county planning entity dedicated to developing comprehensive regional and watershed-specific plans for the district and as a board member of the National Association of Counties Transportation Steering Committee.

Sam is a registered mediator/arbitrator with the Georgia Office of Dispute Resolution. He has been admitted to practice law in Georgia and the District of Columbia.

Recognition

Honors and Awards

- *James Magazine* 2020: Ranked as part of the publication's list of "Most Influential Politically-Connected Attorneys in Georgia."
- *Georgia Trend* 2005-2017: Ranked as part of the publication's 100 Most Influential Georgians issue.
- *Georgia Trend* 2016: Named as "Georgian of the Year."
- Georgia First Amendment Foundation 2015: Winner of the "Charles L. Weltner Freedom of Information Award."
- Boy Scouts of America 2015: Winner of the "Atlanta Area Council Silver Beaver Award."
- *James Magazine* 2013: Named as "Georgian of the Year."
- Emory University School of Law 2013: Winner of the "Distinguished Alumni Award."
- Carl Vinson Institute of Government - University of Georgia in partnership with *Georgia Trend* 2007: Recipient of the "Excellence In Public Service Award."
- Cobb County 2005: Recipient of the "Citizen of the Year" award, presented by the *Marietta Daily Journal*.

Insights

- Co-author, "Leadership Committee" PACs Coming to Georgia Ahead of the 2022 Statewide Elections ,"
Dentons client alert, May 21, 2021
- Co-author, "Georgia Governor Brian Kemp signs expansive new elections bill," Dentons client alert, March 29, 2021
- Co-author, "Opinion: Time for Ga., nation to rediscover ties that bind," *Atlanta Journal Constitution*, January 9, 2021
- "Republicans must respect the Constitution above all else.," *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, December 18, 2020
- Co-author, "What to expect from state attorneys general during a Biden administration," *The Hill*, December 4, 2020
- Co-author, "State Attorneys General and Unfair or Deceptive Acts or Practices (UDAP): What to expect in the wake of COVID-19," Dentons client alert, June 16, 2020
- Co-author, " Why smart governance must come before smart cities," GCN, March 19, 2021
- "Reopening Economy Requires Liability Shield For Businesses," Law360, May 12, 2020
- Co-author, "Needed: Smart Governance," Dentons Global Smart Cities & Communities Think Tank, Fall 2019
- Co-author, "Ohio Attorney General petitions for writ of mandamus to stop opioid trials," Dentons client alert, October 8, 2019
- Co-author, "State attorneys general prepare to apply consumer protection authority to the hemp and cannabis industries," Dentons client alert, August 7, 2019
- "Opinion: Silence is acquiescence, consent for hate," *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, July 12, 2019
- "Viewpoint: Connectivity, A Plan for Economic Development in Rural Georgia," *Atlanta Business Chronicle*, February 19, 2019
- "Cybersecurity' and 'Privacy' Aren't the Same Thing," *The Daily Report*, February 1, 2019
- Co-author, "State Attorneys General Matter. Here's Why. ," *Atlanta Business Chronicle*, January 7, 2019

- Co-author, "Smart Cities - A roadmap for local governments," Dentons client alert, July 19, 2018
- "Dangerous status quo shows need for reform of policing," The Atlanta Journal-Constitution, August, 27, 2016

Activities and Affiliations

- Member, World Affairs Council of Atlanta, 2021
- Member, Inaugural class of Emory University Ambassadors, 2020
- Co-chair, Leadership Cobb, 2022-2023
- Vice co-chair, Leadership Cobb, 2021-2022
- Member, Georgia Chamber Innovation and Technology Policy Committee, 2020
- Member, Georgia Chamber Law and Judiciary Policy Committee, 2020
- Board of Councilors, The Carter Center, 2020
- Firm contact, Southeast US Korean Chamber of Commerce, 2019-present
- Board Member, Cobb County Public Safety Foundation, Inc., 2019-present
- Firm contact, Cobb Chamber of Commerce, 2018-present
- Member of Board, ArtsBridge Foundation, 2017-present
- Vice president, National Association of Attorneys General, 2016
- Chair, National Association of Attorneys General Southern Region, 2013 and 2015
- Board member, Greater Atlanta United Way, 2008-2010
- Volunteer, Atlanta Area Council, Boy Scouts of America, 1999-2011
- In cooperation with the Georgia Food Bank Association and Young Lawyers Division of the State Bar of Georgia, Sam established the Georgia Legal Food Bank Competition in 2012. In those first five years, the equivalent of five million pounds of food were collected for Georgia's youth.

Prior and Present Employment

- President, Kennesaw State University, 2016–2018
- Attorney General of Georgia, 2010–2016
- Vice chair, Metropolitan North Georgia Water District, 2005–2010
- Chair, Atlanta Regional Commission, 2004–2009
- Chairman, Cobb County Board of Commissioners, 2002–2010
- Cobb County commissioner, 1999–2002

Areas of focus

Practices

- Public Policy and Regulation

- State Attorneys General (United States)
- Litigation and Dispute Resolution

Industry sectors

- Government
- State, Regional, Provincial, Municipal and Local Government Bodies
- Cannabis

Issues and opportunities

- Cannabis in the United States
- Global Smart Cities & Connected Communities Initiative and Think Tank

Admissions and qualifications

- District of Columbia
- Georgia

Languages

- English