



Wilson M. Dunlavey, PhD

Partner

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Wilson M. Dunlavey represents government entities, consumers, small businesses, workers, fishers, and residents in complex litigation against fossil fuel companies, automobile manufacturers, and other polluters. Through creativity and tenacity, Wilson has changed company practices and recovered over \$16 billion for his clients in just ten years of practice.

Wilson has been a driving force in changing the law to benefit victims of environmental disasters, including negligence, nuisance, and trespass law.

Among his many active cases, Wilson currently represents the State of California against Big Oil in arguably the most significant environmental litigation ever. They seek to hold Exxon, Shell, Chevron, ConocoPhillips, BP, and the American Petroleum Institute accountable for the decades of deception regarding the impact of climate change.

Wilson's past successes include, in rough reverse order, a \$237.5 million dollar settlement reached in 2024 on behalf of U.S. vehicle owners with Hino Motor Company for misrepresenting their emissions and exceeding regulatory limits; a \$70 million dollar settlement reached in 2024 on behalf of property owners with a pipeline company arising out of an oil spill in Santa Barbara; a \$95 million dollar settlement reached in 2023 on behalf of fishers, property owners, and local businesses with a pipeline company and shipping companies arising out of the 2021 Oil Spill in Huntington Beach, California; a \$230 million dollar settlement reached in 2022 on behalf of property owners and fishers with Plains Pipeline Company arising out of the 2015 Santa Barbara Oil Spill; a \$1.8 billion dollar settlement reached in 2021 on behalf of area residents with Sempra Energy Corporation arising out of the largest methane leak in U.S. history in Porter Ranch, California in 2016; and a series of settlements on behalf of vehicle owners against Volkswagen, Porsche, and Audi in 2022, 2019, 2018, and 2017 arising out of the 2015 "Clean Diesel" Scandal.

Wilson's pro bono practice includes successfully representing unaccompanied Central American minors in obtaining immigration relief.

His hobbies include backpacking, gardening, and singing nursery rhymes with his children on the streets of New York City.

Education

University of California at Berkeley, School of Law (Berkeley Law), Berkeley, California, J.D. - 2015

Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, Ph.D. - 2015

Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, M.A. - 2011

St. John's College, Annapolis, Maryland, B.A. - 2003

Bar Admissions

New York, 2023

California, 2015

U.S. Court of Appeals, 9th Circuit, 2016

U.S. Court of Appeals, District of Columbia, 2021

U.S. District Court, Central District of California, 2016

U.S. District Court, Northern District of California, 2016

U.S. District Court, Western District of Michigan, 2023

U.S. District Court, Eastern District of Michigan, 2019

Professional Associations and Memberships

"American Association for Justice, Class Action Section Content Curator"

Honors & Awards

"Lawdragon 500 Leading Plaintiff Consumer Lawyers in America," Lawdragon, 2023-2025

"Lawdragon 500 X – The Next Generation," Lawdragon, 2023, 2024

"Rising Star for Northern California," Super Lawyers, 2019 - 2023

"California Lawyer of the Year" ("CLAY Award"), California Daily Journal, 2018

"Consumer Attorney of the Year Finalist," Consumer Attorneys of California, 2017

"Outstanding Private Practice Antitrust Achievement," American Antitrust Institute, 2017

Languages

German