



UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON LAW CENTER

# TRADE DEALS



## 2026 OUTLOOK ON NAVIGATING TARIFFS AND U.S. POLICY CHANGES

**Tuesday, February 3, 2026**

12:45-6:15 PM Central Time | Program

6:15-7:30 PM Central Time | Reception

UH Law Foundation Room  
John M. O'Quinn Law Building  
4170 Martin Luther King Blvd.  
Houston, Texas 77204

*In Person Only*

*Approved for 4.75 hours of Texas MCLE credit*

## Agenda

**12:45-1:00 PM**

### **Welcome Remarks**

#### **Elizabeth Trujillo**

Mary Ann & Lawrence E. Faust Professor of Law  
Founding Director, Global Law and Policy for the  
Americas Initiative  
University of Houston Law Center

#### **Devin Sikes**

Partner  
Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP

**1:00-1:50 PM**

### **Keynote Address**

*.75 Texas MCLE*

#### **Kevin Brady**

Former U.S. Representative  
Senior Consultant  
Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP

**1:50-2:50 PM**

### **Tariffs and U.S. Policy Changes**

*1.0 Texas MCLE*

#### **Moderator: Elizabeth Trujillo**

Mary Ann & Lawrence E. Faust Professor of Law  
Founding Director, Global Law and Policy for the  
Americas Initiative  
University of Houston Law Center

#### **Panelists:**

**Chris Mirasola**, Assistant Professor of Law, University of  
Houston Law Center

**Pablo Pinto**, Distinguished Professor; Director, Center  
for Public Policy, University of Houston, Hobby School of  
Public Affairs

**Kelly Ann Shaw**, Partner, Akin Gump Strauss Hauer &  
Feld LLP

**Devin Sikes**, Partner, Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld  
LLP

## Agenda

2:50-3:05 PM

**Coffee Break**

3:05-4:05 PM

**Trade Deals and Implications for Energy Business**

*1.0 Texas MCLE*

**Moderator: Tracy Hester**

Instructional Professor of Law; Co-Director, Environment, Energy and Natural Resources Center, University of Houston Law Center; Founding Co-Director, University of Houston Center for Carbon Management in Energy

**Panelists:**

**Julian Cardenas Garcia**, Research Assistant Professor; Director, Center for U.S. and Mexican Law, University of Houston Law Center

**J. Hayden Harms**, Partner, Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP

**Jorge H. Kamine**, Partner, Corporate & Financial Services, Willkie Farr & Gallagher LLP

**Calvin F. McKnight Jr.**, Senior Legal Counsel, Vitol

4:05-5:05 PM

**Business Tool-Kit for Navigating Tariffs**

*1.0 Texas MCLE*

**Moderator: Devin Sikes**

Partner, Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP

**Panelists:**

**Sarah Dadush**, Professor of Law, Rutgers Law School-Newark; Founding Director, the Responsible Contracting Project

**Nick Diamond**, Counsel, Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP

**Alexis G. Guinan**, Partner, Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP

**Jessica B. Horwitz**, Partner, Bennett Jones LLP

## Agenda

**5:05-6:05 PM**

### **Future Outlook for North American Trade**

*1.0 Texas MCLE*

#### **Moderator: Devin Sikes**

Partner, Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP

#### **Panelists:**

**Sarah B. W. Kirwin**, Partner, Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP

**Matthew Kronby**, Partner, Competition, Trade and Foreign Investment, Osler, Hoskin & Harcourt LLP

**Ricardo Ramírez Hernández**, Founding Partner, RRH Consultores, S.C.

**Elizabeth Trujillo**, Mary Ann & Lawrence E. Faust Professor of Law; Founding Director, Global Law and Policy for the Americas Initiative, University of Houston Law Center

**Sunny Wong**, Associate Dean for Graduate Studies; Professor, Hobby School of Public Affairs, University of Houston

**6:05-6:15 PM**

### **Closing Remarks**

#### **Leonard M. Baynes**

Dean, Hugh Roy and Lillie Cranz Cullen Distinguished Chair, Professor of Law  
University of Houston Law Center

**6:15-7:30 PM**

### **Reception hosted by Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP**

**University of Houston Law Center  
3rd Floor**

# BIOGRAPHIES



## **LEONARD M. BAYNES**

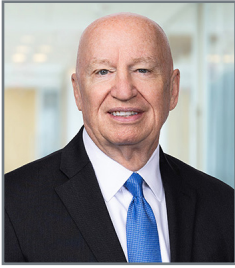
*Dean, Hugh Roy and Lillie Cranz Cullen Distinguished Chair  
Professor of Law  
University of Houston Law Center*

Leonard M. Baynes, currently the longest serving law dean in Texas, made history in 2014 with his appointment as the first dean of African descent at the University of Houston Law Center.

During his deanship, the UH Law Center's admission credentials have steadily increased — the median LSAT score climbed from 159 to 163 and the median GPA grew from 3.47 to 3.79, with over 20% of the students in the 2025 entering class from first-generation college backgrounds and more than 83% from first-generation law school backgrounds. Under Dean Baynes's leadership, the Law Center completed the \$93 million world-class John M. O'Quinn Law Building in 2022 and expanded pathways to legal education through innovative programs including the 3-3 Program with UH Honors College, the UH Law Express Program, and the award-winning Pre-Law Pipeline Programs, which prepare first-generation, economically challenged students for the competitive law school admissions process.

A prolific scholar, Dean Baynes co-authored the casebook "Telecommunications Law: Convergence and Competition" and has published over 25 law review articles and book chapters. He has received numerous honors, including recognition as one of the nation's 100 most influential lawyers of color, the Paul Robeson Award from his alma mater Columbia Law School, and the Clyde Ferguson Award from the Association of American Law Schools. He is serving a three-year term on the AALS' Executive Committee.

# BIOGRAPHIES



## **KEVIN BRADY**

*Former U.S. Representative*

*Senior Consultant*

*Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP*

Former U.S. Rep. Kevin Brady (R-TX) advises clients on a range of public policy and government relations issues, with a special focus on economic issues: tax, trade, health care and energy matters. He served for 26 years as a member of Congress representing the 8th congressional district of Texas, including northern Houston, as well as The Woodlands. A national leader in free trade, Rep. Brady chaired the Trade Subcommittee and helped secure approval of 13 of America's 15 free trade agreements, as well as multiple trade promotion authority, trade facilitation and WTO accession bills. He played a key role in the record bipartisan passage of the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA).

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## **JULIAN CARDENAS GARCIA**

*Research Assistant Professor*

*Director, Center for U.S. and Mexican Law*

*University of Houston Law Center*

Julian Cardenas Garcia is a research assistant professor in the Environment, Energy & Natural Resources Center at the University of Houston Law Center and is Director of the UHLC Center for U.S. and Mexican Law. He specializes in International Oil and Gas Law and Latin American issues with a particular focus on Venezuela. Cardenas Garcia is fluent in English, Spanish, and French.

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## **SARAH DADUSH**

*Professor of Law*

*Rutgers Law School – Newark*

*Founding Director*

*The Responsible Contracting Project*

Professor Dadush writes and teaches in the areas of contracts, business and human rights, remedies, consumer law, and social enterprise law. Her scholarship explores hard and soft law mechanisms for improving the social and environmental performance of multinational corporations.

# BIOGRAPHIES



## NICK DIAMOND

*Counsel*

*Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP*

Nick counsels clients on customs compliance, duty savings strategies, regulatory risk mitigation, and other matters at the intersection of international trade and business. He brings extensive experience from his prior roles as global trade counsel with a major technology company, attorney-advisor with U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP), and U.S. delegate to the World Customs Organization (WCO).

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## ALEXIS GUINAN

*Partner*

*Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP*

Alexis specializes in the application of various international trade laws, including customs and import control matters (such as tariffs and forced labor laws), to transactional matters for private equity and other funds and corporate clients. She advises clients on due diligence and the negotiation of underlying agreements to identify and mitigate international trade-related liabilities and risks in mergers and acquisitions (M&A), financings, and other corporate transactions, including those involving the renewable energy, energy transition and oil and gas sectors.

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## J. HAYDEN HARMS

*Partner*

*Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP*

Hayden assists renewable energy and conventional power clients with commercial contract negotiations on energy generation and infrastructure projects. Hayden also has extensive experience in the renewable energy, energy transition and traditional energy sectors, having advised clients in connection with numerous power generation and storage assets, including wind, solar, battery storage, renewable natural gas, hydrogen, ammonia, carbon capture, liquefied natural gas (LNG) and upstream and midstream oil & gas, as well as various other new and emerging technologies.

# BIOGRAPHIES



## TRACY HESTER

*Instructional Professor of Law*

*Co-Director, EENR*

*University of Houston Law Center*

*Founding Co-Director*

*UH Center for Carbon*

*Management in Energy*

Professor Hester teaches environmental law at the University of Houston Law Center, where he co-directs the Law Center's Environment, Energy & Natural Resources Law Center and the University of Houston's Center for Carbon Management in Energy. He is a recognized expert on the innovative application of environmental laws to emerging technologies and unanticipated risks, including climate engineering, deep decarbonization (particularly in energy production), nanoscale materials and microplastics, and climate liability. In Fall 2019, Professor Hester taught the first U.S. law school course on Climate Intervention Law, which focused on emerging climate engineering technologies and legal challenges. He also originated an innovative Environmental Practicum that matches students with multiple leading environmental attorneys to work on practical projects and to develop creative legal initiatives, and has created an Environmental Appellate Advocacy Institute to identify and participate in cases affecting core interests of environmental law.

Professor Hester was named President-Elect of the American College of Environmental Lawyers in 2023 (and previously served as a Regent from 2018 to 2021). He was also elected as a member of the American Law Institute in 2004, and named the Top Environmental Lawyer in Houston in 2011 by Best Lawyers of America. He was elected to the Council of the American Bar Association's Section on Environment, Energy and Resources (SEER) in 2011 through 2014. Professor Hester is the past chair of SEER's Special Committee on Congressional Relations, its Climate Change and Sustainable Development Committee, and its Environmental Enforcement and Crimes Committee. Professor Hester serves on the American Bar Association's Climate Change Task Force, and he acted as one of the ABA's delegates to the UN climate conferences in 2021, 2022, and 2023.



# BIOGRAPHIES



## **JESSICA B. HORWITZ**

*Partner*

*Bennett Jones LLP*

Jessica Horwitz is a partner at Bennett Jones LLP in Toronto, specializing in international trade and investment law. She advises clients on a wide range of trade-related matters including customs, trade remedies, WTO law, export controls and economic sanctions, and supply chain compliance and represents businesses in appeals, enforcement, and investigations with Canadian regulatory and law enforcement agencies. Recognized by Chambers Global, Legal 500 Canada, and Best Lawyers in Canada, she is actively involved in several legal organizations and has held leadership roles in not-for-profit industry associations.

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## **JORGE H. KAMINE**

*Partner, Corporate & Financial Services*

*Willkie Farr & Gallagher LLP*

Jorge Kamine is a partner in the Corporate & Financial Services Department and Co-Chair of the Project Finance & Investment Practice Group at Willkie Farr & Gallagher LLP. Mr. Kamine focuses his practice on a wide range of domestic and cross-border transactions in the energy and infrastructure sector in the United States and globally with a particular emphasis on the debt and equity financing of projects and the structuring, acquisition and divestment of investments in a broad array of energy and infrastructure projects and assets. He has broad experience across the energy industry, including specific experience with renewable and conventional power and transmission, LNG and other midstream infrastructure, and various energy transition projects, including hydrogen and biofuels projects. He also has specific experience with public-private partnerships and investments in transportation and other non-energy infrastructure and natural resource development.

# BIOGRAPHIES



## **SARAH KIRWIN**

*Partner*

*Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP*

Sarah advises U.S. and foreign clients on complex strategy and compliance matters at the intersection of trade policy and supply chain regulation. She guides clients through tariff mitigation strategies, customs and forced labor compliance, supply chain due diligence, foreign entity restrictions, and access to investment and production tax credits. She also represents sovereign governments in trade disputes before the World Trade Organization (WTO), free trade agreement (FTA) panels, and other international fora.

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## **MATTHEW KRONBY**

*Partner, Competition, Trade and Foreign Investment  
Osler, Hoskin & Harcourt LLP*

Matthew is a partner in the Competition, International Trade and Foreign Investment Group of the Toronto office of Osler, Hoskin & Harcourt LLP. He specializes in cross-border compliance and dispute resolution under trade agreements, investment treaties and Canadian law. He assists business and government clients from around the world in trade negotiations and disputes under agreements such as the WTO Agreement, the USMCA and the CPTPP; in trade remedy proceedings; and in navigating economic sanctions and export control laws. Matthew has led legal teams in WTO panel and Appellate Body proceedings in matters involving subsidies, dumping, sanitary and phytosanitary measures, technical barriers and tariffs, and in investment arbitrations under the NAFTA.

Matthew was previously Director-General of the Government of Canada's Trade Law Bureau (from 2009–2012) and served in the Bureau for fifteen years. He was Canada's chief legal counsel in the negotiation of the CETA with the European Union and various other trade and investment treaty negotiations. He began his career as a foreign service officer, including a posting to the Canadian Embassy in Washington, D.C., where he focused on trade and economic sanctions legislation and trans-border resource and environmental issues.

# BIOGRAPHIES



## **CALVIN F. McKNIGHT JR.**

*Senior Legal Counsel  
Vitol*

Calvin F. McKnight Jr. serves as Senior Legal Counsel at Vitol, where he supports the Commodities and Global Markets teams. In this role, Calvin delivers legal and strategic advice on a broad spectrum of physical and financial commodity transactions, including the structuring and negotiation of trading agreements, regulatory compliance, and the development of new products in evolving energy markets. He works closely with front-office traders, risk, compliance, and operations teams to facilitate deal execution and manage legal risks. Before joining Vitol, Calvin practiced law at Akin, where he advised clients on project development, acquisitions, divestitures, and strategic joint ventures involving diverse energy assets. He has extensive experience guiding energy and infrastructure clients through all stages of drafting and negotiating agreements for the purchase, sale, development, and financing of projects across various energy sectors.

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## **CHRIS MIRASOLA**

*Assistant Professor of Law  
University of Houston Law Center*

Chris Mirasola's work focuses on emerging questions of national security and international law. His scholarship situates legal doctrines in a historical context and is informed by time working as a Department of Defense attorney and in the People's Republic of China (PRC). Chris's projects have been published, or are forthcoming, in the *University of Southern California Law Review*, *University of Pennsylvania Law Review Online*, the *Harvard National Security Journal*, and the *Harvard Negotiation Law Review*, among other publications. He has also written on national security law, international law, and PRC law topics for *Lawfare*. Chris frequently advises on national security law and international law matters, with a particular recent focus on the law regarding military deployments within the United States.

# BIOGRAPHIES



## **PABLO PINTO**

*Distinguished Professor  
Director, Center for Public Policy  
University of Houston  
Hobby School of Public Affairs*

Pablo M. Pinto is a Distinguished Professor at the University of Houston's Hobby School of Public Affairs, and affiliated faculty in the Department of Political Science. Pinto directs Hobby School's Center for Public Policy which conducts research on project evaluation and economic impact analysis of public policies at the local, national and global levels. Pinto served as UH Energy Faculty Fellow, non-resident Scholar in the Latin America Initiative of the Baker Institute at Rice University, and co-editor of the journal *Economics & Politics*. He holds an M.A. from Aoyama Gakuin University in Japan, and a Ph.D. in Political Science and International Affairs from the University of California, San Diego. He received a Law Degree from Universidad Nacional de La Plata, Argentina. Prior to joining the University of Houston in 2014, Pinto was a member of the faculty of the Department of Political Science at Columbia University in the City of New York. He taught at the Escuela Nacional de Gobierno in his native Argentina, and the Universidad Nacional de La Plata and was Chief Counsel for Toyota Argentina.

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## **RICARDO RAMÍREZ HERNÁNDEZ**

*Founding Partner  
RRH Consultores, S.C.*

Ricardo Ramírez Hernández has over 25 years of experience and has participated in more than 70 cases under various trade agreements, serving as a litigant, judge, or arbitrator. For nearly nine years, he was a judge on the World Trade Organization's (WTO) Appellate Body, its highest court. He is the first Mexican to have served on this body and was elected by his peers as its

President for two consecutive terms.

In 2017, he was appointed by the Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the World Bank to serve on the Panel of Arbitrators of the International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID) for a six-year term. He is one of the most active Mexican arbitrators resolving disputes between investors and states under various international instruments, include ICSID and UNCITRAL rules. He was also a member of the first arbitral tribunal to analyze labor provisions contained in a free trade agreement.

As a panelist, he has participated in various proceedings under Chapter XIX of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). He was appointed an independent trade expert to the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum and is a member of the panel of several free trade agreements.

# BIOGRAPHIES



## KELLY ANN SHAW

*Partner*

*Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP*

Kelly Ann is recognized as one of the world's leading advisors on international trade, global economics, and national security, bringing nearly two decades of policy experience. She served as President Trump's Deputy Assistant to the President for International Economic Affairs and as the U.S. Sherpa for the G7, G20, and APEC. Earlier in her career, Kelly Ann served as

Trade Counsel to the U.S. House Ways and Means Committee and as Assistant General Counsel for the Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR).

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## DEVIN SIKES

*Partner*

*Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP*

Devin represents corporations, industry associations, and governments in complex international trade matters before U.S. agencies. He leads clients through high-stakes international trade litigation before U.S. courts and international tribunals and provides practical advice on the day-to-day impact of U.S. trade law and policy. Devin also serves on the U.S. roster of

panelists who resolve trade remedy disputes arising under Chapter 10 of the USMCA. Prior to joining Akin, he served in the U.S. government for nearly a decade in various roles within the judicial and executive branches.

# BIOGRAPHIES



## ELIZABETH TRUJILLO

*Mary Ann & Lawrence E. Faust Professor of Law  
Founding Director, Global Law and Policy for the Americas Initiative  
University of Houston Law Center*

Elizabeth Trujillo is the Mary Ann & Lawrence E. Faust Professor of Law and the Founding Director of the Initiative on Global Law and Policy for the Americas. She was a recent recipient of the Fernand Braudel Senior Fellowship at the European University Institute (EUI) Department of Law, and is a visiting fellow with the Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies at the European University Institute. Professor Trujillo writes and teaches in international trade and investment law, USMCA, sustainable development and energy, contracts, and international business, using comparative law methods. She is a recognized scholar in international trade and investment, and the related considerations for domestic decarbonization strategies and biodiversity. She has regularly advised on related policy recommendations. Her writings have been published in several leading law journals in the U.S. and abroad such as *Harvard Latin American Law Review*, *Boston College Law Review*, and the *Journal of International Economic Law*. In 2024, she received the Global Faculty Award from the University of Houston Provost Office for her work in furthering university global strategies, and was inducted into the 2025 University President's Circle Awards for her contributions towards research and scholarship. Professor Trujillo is an elected member of the American Law Institute.

# BIOGRAPHIES



## SUNNY WONG

*Associate Dean for Graduate Studies  
Professor, Hobby School of Public Affairs  
University of Houston*

Born in Hong Kong, Sunny Wong moved to the United States to pursue his higher education after he graduated from high school in 1995. He received his Bachelor of Science (1998), Master of Science (2000) and Ph.D. degrees (2002) in Economics from the University of Oregon.

Prior to his various roles at the Hobby School, Wong taught in the Department of Economics at the University of San Francisco (2006-2017) and in the Department of Economics and International Business at the University of Southern Mississippi (2002-2006). Wong also was an honorary instructor at the Essex Summer School in Social Science Data Analysis and Collection at the University of Essex in England (2006-2008).

Wong's teaching and research interests include monetary policy, learning dynamics, business-cycle theory, foreign direct investment and the empirical implications of theoretical models (EITM). He has published research articles in academic journals such as *American Journal of Political Science*, *World Development*, *Macroeconomic Dynamics*, *Economics Letters*, *Computational Economics*, *Economic Inquiry*, *Electoral Studies* and *Finance Research Letters*.

Wong has coauthored two books with Hobby School of Public Affairs Dean Jim Granato, *The Role of Policymakers in Business Cycle Fluctuations* and *The Empirical Implications of Theoretical Models in Political Science* — both published by Cambridge University Press.

# Event Partners

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