

## DAILY REPORT

# King & Spalding Reelects Robert Hays to Seventh Term as Chairman

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### What You Need to Know

- King & Spalding recently reelected Robert Hays to another three-year term as chairman.
- Since Hays began leading the firm as chairman, it has more than tripled its revenues and profitability.
- The firm now operates 23 offices in the U.S., Europe, the Middle East and eastern Asia.

King & Spalding partners reelected its chairman of the past 18 years for his seventh consecutive term leading the firm. The firm, founded in Atlanta in 1885, has reelected Robert Hays to another three-year term, beginning Jan. 1, the firm said Wednesday.

In a statement, Hays said it was “an honor to once again be entrusted with the stewardship of this fantastic firm as we look to the next stage in our evolution.”

Since Hays began leading the firm as chairman, King & Spalding has more than tripled its revenues and profitability and almost quadrupled the number of offices it operates worldwide. Its 2023 revenues and other



Robert Hays.

Photo: John Disney/ALM

metrics also will exceed its 2022 totals, he said in a recent interview.

Hays said the key to future financial success is “drawing really talented people who are very committed to the clients” and winning their trust in handling complex legal matters “to gain more business.”

“If you don’t have the talented people who are committed to the clients, then you can’t grow revenue and profitability above the average like we’ve been able to do consistently for a decade,” he said.

Hays' responsibilities as chairman include focusing "on the strategic growth and direction of our firm and building strong relationships with clients," according to its website. He also chairs the policy committee that governs the firm, among other duties.

Among the most-recent lawyers to join the firm are economic development attorney Stephanie Yarbrough in the firm's corporate, finance and investments practice group in Washington, D.C.; and intellectual property lawyer Alfonso Chan in its trial and global disputes practice group in Austin, Texas.

Before his election as chairman, Hays was a product liability and mass tort litigation partner and served in a variety of leadership roles, including six years as a policy committee member and 12 years as leader of its tort and environmental litigation group. He began serving as chairman in 2006 and led the firm to:

- More than triple its gross revenues from \$582.5 million in 2006 to \$2.02 billion in 2022, according to ALM data. The firm also was among only 17 U.S. law firms with revenues exceeding \$2 billion in 2022.
- More than triple its profits per equity partner, from \$1.31 million in 2006 to \$4.7 million in 2022, and almost double its revenue per lawyer from \$782,000 in 2006 to \$1.53 million in 2022.
- Grow its lawyer head count by 62%, from 800 in 2006 to 1,313 today.
- Expand from four to 13 U.S. offices and, internationally, from two offices in Dubai

and London in 2006, to 10 offices throughout Europe, the Middle East and Asia today.

"That the partnership has elected Robert to a seventh term as chairman underscores his vision and unwavering commitment to the success of our firm and all of its people," said partner Zach Fardon, a member of the firm's policy committee, in a statement.

Hays recalled he was recruited by the firm's legendary senior partner and former U.S. attorney general Griffin Bell in the 1980s when the firm only operated its flagship office in Atlanta and a small office in Washington, D.C.

Bell—who served in the administration of President Jimmy Carter—was a senior partner at the time of Hays' recruitment but was "always talking about the future" of the firm. That kind of "long-term thinking" helped it follow the lead of companies like Coca-Cola—a King & Spalding client for more than a century—and grow to become a global firm with 23 offices on three continents, Hays said.

"When you bring people who are that committed in long-term thinking to the firm, and then they have a common mission that they're committed to, to do great work for great clients globally, then you're able to see how a firm (can grow)," he said.

Hays' reelection as chairman is a departure from a consistent trend within the Am Law 200. At least 30 large law firms have announced some kind of leadership transition within the last year or so, The American Lawyer has reported.