



# Ruben A. Smith

## Managing Shareholder

1 MacArthur Place, Suite 200  
Santa Ana , CA 92707

rsmith@alvaradosmith.com  
Phone: 714.852.6800

### Practices & Industries

- Transactions
- Government & Regulatory
- Retail, Food & Beverage
- Energy, Oil & Gas
- Education

### Overview

Ruben Smith, Managing Shareholder of the firm, helps his corporate, private company, and public entity clients—including various groups in the education sector—develop creative and efficient solutions to meet their objectives. Clients rely on his advice and guidance to structure transactions and solve business and legal problems they encounter in a variety of redevelopment, transportation projects, affordable housing, water, school, and business and public dispute resolution strategies.

In one such example, he assisted one of California's largest school districts in its efforts to erect a much-needed high school. Ruben's client had received federal approval to build the school on a 60-acre parcel of land in a neighboring city, but that authorization was put into jeopardy when changes to federal law gave greater discretion to cities to grant consent to projects of this type. To protect his client's interests, Ruben collaborated with state lawmakers on changes to California law that would require cities to honor obligations of this type; his successful efforts led to a \$60 million dollar settlement from the city for his client to build the school in another location.

In addition, Ruben represents several water districts in the southern California region as a strategic legal advisor, providing collaborative and forward-looking guidance to identify and implement the comprehensive legal strategies—to litigation, annexations, and water and waste water management, among other issues—that best advance their business interests.

Ruben regularly provides general corporate, transactional, litigation, and regulatory advice on a wide range of commercial, financial, and real estate transactions both in and outside of the United States. In each case, he works closely with his clients to identify their goals and desired outcomes so that they can collaboratively design strategies that will allow them to meet their objectives.

As Managing Shareholder of AlvaradoSmith, Ruben leads a diverse, multicultural group of attorneys dedicated to partnering with their clients to help them achieve business and strategic success, as efficiently and cost-effectively as possible.

Ruben is a founding member of the Hispanic Education Endowment Fund, and is currently the Chair of the Latino Foods Industry Association. He has acted as General Counsel for several public education entities, as an assistant city attorney, and regularly serves on boards of various non-profit organizations, including St. Joseph's Hospital in Orange. In addition, he is active in local and regional business organizations, including in particular in leadership roles as a current or past board member of the Orange County Business Council, the Latino Coalition, and the Orange County Hispanic Chamber.

## Memberships

- Member, St. Joseph Hospital Board of Trustees
- Member, Orange County Bar Association
- Member, Orange County Bar Association
- Founder, Hispanic Education Endowment Fund
- Chair, Latino Foods Industry Association
- Member of City National Bank's Latino Advisory Board
- Member of the Orange County Hispanic Chamber of Commerce Advisory Board
- Member of the USC Latino Alumni Association Corporate Advisory Council
- Past President, Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Orange County
- Past President, Hispanic Bar Association of Orange County
- Past President and Board member, 32nd District Agricultural Association dba OC Fair & Event Center – Board of Directors 1999-2007
- Past Chairman, USC Latino Alumni Association Corporate Advisory Council
- Past Member, California Housing Finance Agency Board of Directors
- Past Member of Southern California Minority Business Development Council's Minority Business Enterprise Input Committee
- Past Member, Orange County Business Chamber Board of Directors
- Past Member, Merrill Lynch Smith Barney Advisory Board

## Education / Admissions

### **Education:**

- J.D., Yale Law School, 1984
- M.P.A., Inter-Governmental Management, with honors, University of Southern California
- B.S., Public Affairs, with honors, University of Southern California, 1979
- Extra-Mural Studies Modern Britain, University of Cambridge, England, Summer, 1978

### **Bar Admissions:**

State Bar of California

## Accolades

- Martindale-Hubbell AV Preeminent® Rated Lawyer
- Ruben was a recipient of the 2017 University of Southern California Latino Alumni Association Legacy Award.

## Matters

Ruben's work includes:

- Representing two separate global oil and gas companies in a \$2 billion sale of four refineries and 1,200 service stations; and \$1.3 billion sale of a refinery and more than 1,500 service stations throughout California and Washington.
- Representing several community college districts in Orange County regarding governance issues, acquisition of buildings for district offices, and acquisition and development of other properties and buildings for the colleges.
- Currently acting as General Counsel for two national chambers of commerce – the United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and the Latino Coalition – and the Orange County Hispanic Chamber, advising them on a broad range of matters including restructuring their boards and bylaws to operate more efficiently.

## Recent Publications / Presentations

- AlvaradoSmith's Managing Shareholder Ruben Smith Featured in Of Counsel: The Legal Practice and Management Report

## Recent News

- AlvaradoSmith's Ruben Smith, honored as a Pioneer by the USC Sol Price School of Public Policy
- AlvaradoSmith's Managing Shareholder Ruben Smith Featured in Of Counsel: The Legal Practice and Management Report
- AlvaradoSmith represents CalPERS Joint Venture in \$325 Million Acquisition of Apartment Complex and Marina
- Q&A for Commercial Landlords and Tenants: Tips on Negotiating Leases & Addressing Lender Issues