

Christopher H. Grigorian

Partner

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Christopher H. Grigorian is widely regarded as one of the nation's leading advisors to motor vehicle manufacturers and major automotive suppliers on the full spectrum of National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) regulatory matters. As a partner and chair of the firm's NHTSA & Motor Vehicle Safety Practice, and co-chair of the Trade Association Practice, Chris is known for his practical, collaborative approach and deep industry insight.

With decades of experience, Chris has guided clients through well over a hundred safety recalls and investigations — including some of the largest and most significant in NHTSA's history. He helps companies manage every facet of compliance with Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards, defect reporting and recall obligations, enforcement proceedings, TREAD reporting, rulemaking advocacy, emerging issues related to autonomous and electric vehicles, and other critical compliance issues under the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act, the TREAD Act, and related NHTSA regulations.

His practice spans an impressive array of clients — from global manufacturers of cars, trucks, buses, RVs, and motorcycles to OEM and aftermarket suppliers of lighting systems, tires, airbags and restraints, driveline and brake components, active safety technologies, emissions and exhaust systems, EV batteries, suspension components, child restraints, electronics, and other critical vehicle systems and technologies. His practice also extends to counseling on federal and California emissions certification and compliance, as well as related commercial and supply chain concerns.

A highly collaborative counselor, Chris is known for building long-term relationships with clients and industry stakeholders alike. He regularly speaks at key industry events and trade association gatherings, where he shares practical strategies and insights to help manufacturers meet their regulatory obligations.

Chris is also a trusted advisor to industry associations, representing them in complex rulemaking proceedings and providing strategic counsel to their members on safety and regulatory compliance. He currently serves as

general counsel to two trade associations, advising on antitrust, governance, commercial, and employment matters.

Chris's dedication to client service and deep subject-matter expertise have been recognized by Chambers USA, which named him one of America's leading lawyers in Transportation: Road (Automotive) every year since 2013 (most recently in the coveted Band 1). Clients have praised him as "exceptionally knowledgeable and very responsive," underscoring the trust and confidence he inspires among his clients.

Earlier in his career, Chris honed his litigation skills as a trial and senior trial attorney at the U.S. Department of Justice, Tax Division, where he litigated cases in federal courts nationwide and earned the Tax Division's Outstanding Attorney Award.

Awards and Recognition

- *Chambers USA* has recognized Chris as one of America's leading lawyers in Transportation: Road (Automotive), noting that clients described him as "exceptionally knowledgeable and very responsive." (2013 – 2025)

Presentations and Publications

- Presenter, "U.S. Legal Issues and Current Developments Around Migrating to Electric Vehicles," National Auto Parts Industry (INA) (Mexico), March 7, 2022
- Panelist, "Original Equipment Suppliers Association Mobility Supplier Forum," Palo Alto, CA (August 25, 2022)
- Co-author, "Top Legal Issues Facing the Automotive Industry in 2022," *White Paper*, Detroit, MI (March 2022)
- Presenter, "How Automotive Companies Can Prepare for Upcoming Changes to International Trade, Labor, Environmental, and Safety Rules," Foley & Lardner Webinar (March 9, 2021)
- Co-author, "Top Legal Issues Facing the Automotive Industry in 2020," *White Paper*, Detroit, MI (January 2021)
- Quoted, "AV standards slowed, not stopped, by pandemic," *Automotive World* (June 1, 2020)
- Quoted, "What's the post-COVID outlook for CASE?" *Automotive World* (May 27, 2020)
- Co-author, "NHTSA Takes Another Step Forward in Removing Regulatory Barriers for Automated Driving Systems," *Dashboard Insights* (March 26, 2020)
- Presenter, "Auto-Tech Mission Program," Palo Alto, CA (March 3, 2020)
- Co-author, "Top Legal Issues Facing the Automotive Industry in 2020," *White Paper*, Detroit, MI (January 2020)
- Mentioned, "Driving the Future of Automotive Technology," *Dashboard Insights* (December 12, 2019)
- Presenter, "Critical Risk Issues for In-House Counsel: Planning for 2020," Original Equipment Suppliers Association, Detroit, MI (October 8, 2019)
- Co-author, "Congress Taking Another Look at Regulating Automated Driving Systems," *Dashboard Insights* (September 10, 2019)

- Co-author, “Balancing Regulation and Innovation: How NHTSA is Approaching Motor Vehicle Safety in 2019,” *Dashboard Insights* (March 5, 2019)
- Moderator, “Navigating the Road Ahead ... Are You Ready?,” *Dashboard Insights* (February 14, 2019)
- Co-author, “Top Legal Issues Facing the Automotive Industry in 2019,” *White Paper*, Detroit, MI (January 2019)
- Panelist, “Concordant Crossroads: Regulation and Innovation in the Automotive Industry,” Thomson Reuters Legal Executive Institute, New York, NY (October 4, 2019)
- Panelist, “Emerging Automotive Technologies: Tomorrow’s Trends Today,” Foley & Lardner’s Emerging Tech Program, Boston, MA (May 22, 2018)
- Co-author, “NHTSA and Motor Vehicle Safety,” *Dashboard Insights* (March 1, 2018)
- Panelist, “RVIA Annual NHTSA Compliance Seminar,” Recreation Vehicle Industry Association (May 1, 2018; May 2, 2017; and May 4, 2016)
- Author, “NHTSA’s Approach to Autonomous Vehicles Taking Form,” *WardsAuto* (February 22, 2018)
- Author, “Driverless Cars Should be New Legislative Priority for Congress,” *The Hill* (January 24, 2018)
- Quoted, “The 4 Hottest Practice Areas For 2018,” *Law360* (January 1, 2018)
- Co-author, “Top Legal Issues Facing the Automotive Industry in 2018,” *White Paper*, Detroit, MI (January 2018)
- Panelist, “Connected Vehicles and Emerging Technologies in the Automotive Industry,” Foley & Lardner Emerging Tech Program, Palo Alto, CA (October 24, 2017)
- Author, “SELF DRIVE Act Passes the House as Senate Prepares Its Own Bill,” *Dashboard Insights* (September 11, 2017)
- Quoted, “3 Takeaways From The Self-Driving Car Bill,” *Law360* (September 8, 2017)
- Author, “Late to the Scene, the “Safely Ensuring Lives Future Deployment and Research In Vehicle Evolution Act” (“SELF DRIVE Act”) Seeks to Set Course for Future Development,” *Dashboard Insights* (July 31, 2017)
- Presenter, “Product Safety Recall – The Decision Process,” Product Safety & Compliance Seminar, Association of Equipment Manufacturers, Indianapolis, IN (April 24 – 26, 2017)
- Author, “V2V Communications: Motor Vehicle Safety Guidelines,” *Dashboard Insights* (March 16, 2017)
- Author, “Automated Vehicles: NHTSA Has Spoken,” *Dashboard Insights* (March 13, 2017)
- Author, “Cybersecurity: Yes, They Will Hack Your Car,” *Dashboard Insights* (March 9, 2017)
- Author, “NHTSA Issues Recommended Best Practices for Protective Orders and Settlement Agreements in Private Litigation,” *Dashboard Insights* (March 24, 2016)
- Author, “Proactive Safety Principles Agreement Reached with NHTSA” (January 25, 2016)
- Author, “2016 Outlook: NHTSA, Automotive Safety, and Cybersecurity” (January 21, 2016)
- Co-author, “Top Legal Issues Facing the Automotive Industry in 2016,” *White Paper*, Detroit, MI (January, 2016)
- Author, “NHTSA Announces Record Setting Civil Penalty in Consent Order With Chrysler,” *Dashboard Insights* (August 3, 2015)
- Author, “Under The Hood: NHTSA’s Reporting Requirements,” *Law360* (July 7, 2015)

- Author, "DOT Issues Scathing Internal Report of NHTSA's Defect Investigation Processes," *Dashboard Insights* (June 29, 2015)
- Author, "NHTSA Seeks to Push Beyond the 'New Normal' and into the 'New Paradigm'," *Dashboard Insights* (June 11, 2015)
- Co-author, "5 Antitrust Lessons for Trade Associations From 2 Recent FTC Challenges," *Westlaw Journal Antitrust* (June 2015)
- Author, "What's Next for NHTSA and Automotive Safety," *WardsAuto* (May 8, 2015)
- Author, "NHTSA's Enforcement Priorities Made Clear in U.S. DOT's Transportation Bill (Grow America Act)," *Dashboard Insights* (April 27, 2015)
- Panelist, "Lessons Learned from Recent Recalls," KPMG Legal & Compliance Share Forum, Los Angeles, CA (November 20, 2014)
- Author, "NHTSA's September Scrutiny," *Dashboard Insights* (October 2, 2014)
- Author, "A Busy Year for NHTSA Enforcement and Rulemaking," *Dashboard Insights* (September 18, 2014)
- Author, "NHTSA and GM Agree to Resolve Timeliness Claims Related to Ignition Switch Recall," *Dashboard Insights* (May 20, 2014)
- Author, "A Peek at the NHTSA Provisions in the U.S. DOT's Transportation Bill," *Dashboard Insights* (May 5, 2014)
- Co-author, "How Auto Suppliers Can Prepare for Recalls," *Law360* (May 1, 2014)
- Author, "Expect a Busy Year for NHTSA Rulemaking and Enforcement," *Automotive World* (April 28, 2014)
- Co-author, "Top Legal Issues Facing Automotive Suppliers in 2014," *White Paper*, Detroit, MI (January, 2014)
- Author, "New Requirements for NHTSA Recalls and Early Warning Reporting Become Effective October 21," *Dashboard Insights* (October 17, 2013)
- Author, "Auto Parts Distributor Avoids Liability In Robinson-Patman Suit," *Dashboard Insights* (August 12, 2013)
- Author, "U.S. Department of Transportation Inspector General Issues Report of Audit of NHTSA's Office of Defects Investigation" (October 1, 2011)
- Co-author, "Recent Developments in Food and Product Safety Policy Affecting Importers and Foreign Suppliers" (October 14, 2009)
- Author, "Plastech-Chrysler Dispute Illustrates Challenges for Suppliers to Recover Tooling" (March 24, 2008)
- Author, "Foreign Tire Sales, Inc.'s Recall of Imported Tires: Lessons for Parts Importers Regarding NHTSA and Product Liability Responsibility" (July 7, 2007)

Sectors

- [Automotive](#)
- [Manufacturing](#)



FOLEY & LARDNER LLP

Practice Areas

- [Corporate](#)

Education

- American University Washington College of Law (J.D., 1989)
- George Washington University (B.B.A., 1986)

Admissions

- District of Columbia
- Maryland
- U.S. District Court
 - Colorado
 - District of Columbia
 - District of Maryland
- U.S. Court of Appeals
 - District of Columbia
 - Fourth Circuit
 - Seventh Circuit