THOMPSON
COE



Thomas Benedict

Partner

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Thomas Benedict is a trial lawyer who handles high-stakes cases involving commercial disputes, mass torts, unfair and deceptive trade claims, product liability, and personal injury. Over his 35-year career, he has obtained jury verdicts in favor of both plaintiffs and defendants. He is recognized as one of the Best Lawyers in Hawaii in Commercial Litigation, Personal Injury – Defense, and Product Liability – Defense.

Thom is repeatedly retained by national law firms and lawyers from New York, Washington DC, Chicago, and Los Angeles to help them navigate Hawaii's courts as their co-counsel for their valued clients. After seeing Thom's persuasive talents in trials and mock trials with Hawaii jurors, Fortune 100 companies have entrusted Thom to be their trial counsel in high-stakes Hawaii cases. In one *parens patriae* case brought by the State of Hawaii against over 30 pharmaceutical manufacturers, he was retained – back to back – by three different defendants to be their trial counsel, and ultimately, went to trial for a defendant facing a multi-billion dollar exposure.

Thom argued his first case before the Hawaii Supreme Court less than two years after passing the bar and has since argued cases to Hawaii's Intermediate Court of Appeals and Supreme Court, as well as the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals. Thom created a new Hawaii case law through his appellate work, which is regularly cited in personal injury litigation today.

Representative Experience

PRODUCT LIABILITY

Obtained a jury verdict in favor of a Fortune 50 company in a case where the plaintiff claimed that his mesothelioma was caused by defects in the respiratory protection products he used in his workplace as part of a talented trial team.

Obtained summary judgments on behalf of pharmaceutical manufacturers and medical device makers in state and federal court.

Defended equipment manufacturers in asbestos litigation, securing favorable resolutions.

COMMERCIAL LITIGATION

Secured a jury verdict in favor of one of the largest manufacturers of 3D printers in a contract dispute.

Negotiated solutions to disputes between businesses in various industry sectors, including restaurant/hospitality, telecommunications, transportation, and tour operators.

Represented one of the nation's largest banks in financial services litigation, including a class action arising from non-judicial foreclosures following the 2008 financial crisis and a case brought by the State of Hawaii concerning payment protection plans.

Obtained a jury verdict in favor of Historic Hawaii Foundation, a non-profit, in a claim brought by a former board member.

Successfully defended insurance companies against claims of first-party and third-party bad faith.

PERSONAL INJURY LITIGATION

Secured a defense verdict from a jury on behalf of the Rescue Team of the City and County of Honolulu Fire Department.

Obtained a jury verdict on behalf of an elderly couple in a medical malpractice case against a cardiologist, cardiothoracic surgeon, pulmonologist, and hospital, and created a new Hawaii law in the process.

Defended a prestigious global law firm in fraud and personal injury cases involving the tobacco industry, ultimately helping it win motions to dismiss based upon lack of jurisdiction.

Represented a leading wireless telecommunications carrier with respect to claims for personal injury and property damage arising from the August 2023 Maui Wildfires.

Successfully defended premises liability claims against hotels, retailers, grocery store chains, and restaurants.

Defended a Hawaii-based helicopter tour company in a fatal crash in which five people were killed.

Secured a substantial settlement on behalf of an estate and individual arising from a deadly helicopter crash on Molokai.

Represented key defendants in mass tort claims involving fen-phen, Rezulin, Vioxx, and implanted medical devices.

UNFAIR AND DECEPTIVE TRADE PRACTICES

Represented four separate pharmaceutical manufacturers against an unfair and deceptive trade practices claim brought by the State of Hawaii.

Defended an international manufacturer of airbags in an unfair and deceptive trade practices action brought by the State of Hawaii.

Represented a Fortune Top 10 pharmaceutical distributor in an action brought by the State of Hawaii against entities involved in the manufacture, sale, and distribution of prescription opioids.

Awards & Recognition

BEST LAWYERS IN AMERICA

Listed for Commercial Litigation, Personal Injury Litigation - Defense, Product Liability Litigation - Defense, Insurance Law, Litigation - Insurance, and Mass Tort Litigation / Class Actions - Defendants

2024-2027

THE BEST LAWYERS IN AMERICA

Lawyer of the Year for Product Liability Litigation - Defendants

2026

BENCHMARK LITIGATION

Future Star

2024

Related Services

Education, Admissions & Activities

EDUCATION

University of Michigan Law School

J.D.

Henry M. Campbell Moot Court Competition, semi-finalist

Michigan Ross School of Business

BBA, with Distinction

Northwestern Michigan College

A.S., with Honors

BAR ADMISSIONS

Hawaii

COURT ADMISSIONS

United States District Court of Hawaii

Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals

U.S. Supreme Court

PROFESSIONAL AND COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

International Association of Defense Counsel

Federal Bar Association
Hawaii Chapter

Defense Research Institute
Hawaii State Representative, 2014-2017

Malama Mānoa
Board Member; Second Vice President

Hawaii Public Radio
Community Advisory Board, 2019-2021; Chair, 2021-2022