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Top 100 Lawyers AND DISTINGUISHED COUNSEL



ELLIOT R. PETERS

KEKER, VAN NEST & PETERS LLP
LITIGATION
SAN FRANCISCO

Elliot R. Peters worked as a federal prosecutor in the Southern District of New York before joining the firm that now bears his name in 1991. The shop became Keker, Van Nest & Peters LLP in 2017.

His elevation to name partner came after years of handling significant white-collar criminal, antitrust, commercial and professional liability matters.

"As a firm, we wanted to indicate to the world that we were more than just John [Keker] and Bob [Van Nest]," Peters said.

His marquee work included representing clients like Major League Baseball after the federal government seized professional athletes' drug-testing records; the PGA Tour in a case brought by LIV Golf players; pro cyclist Lance Armstrong; investment banker Frank Quattrone; securities lawyer William Lerach; Genentech; and Standard & Poor's.

Peters and Robert Van Nest currently represent OpenAI in consolidated copyright infringement litigation filed by authors, publishers, newspapers and media organizations. The outcome will help define the scope of the fair use doctrine in the context of artificial intelligence and machine learning.

In 2025, the Keker team secured a significant procedural victory when the Judicial Panel on Multidistrict Litigation centralized numerous related cases, despite plaintiffs' opposition. *In re: OpenAI Copy-right Infringement Litigation*, 1:25-md-3143 (S.D.N.Y.,filed April 11, 2025).

Another active matter involves Peters' representation of Children's Hospital Colorado in a challenge to the Trump administration over official demands for patient information related to gender-affirming care.

In January 2026, the court quashed the government's subpoena in a significant victory for patient privacy, healthcare providers, and limits on executive authority, with potential implications for similar investigations nationwide.

The case has since developed into a different kind of showdown. Patients accuse the hospital of contempt of court for breaking a judicial order to provide gender care, despite the hospital's inability to require its doctors to flout government directives.

"This is like a wrestling match among the wrong people," Peters said. "We'd like to provide the care, but the doctors fear the hostility coming from the Trump administration." *Children's Hospital Colorado v. U.S. Department of Justice*, 1:23-cv-02561 (D. Colo., filed Sept. 29, 2023).

It wasn't his first run-in. Peters, along with the firm's other leaders and partners, has been outspoken in condemning President Trump's executive actions targeting law firms. Keker, Van Nest & Peters was the first law firm to issue an official statement (written by Peters) condemning the executive actions.

As some firms fought back and others capitulated, Peters and other firm leaders said they received extraordinary attention for defending the profession and the rule of law. Peters contributed to an op-ed for The New York Times, appeared on CNN with Anderson Cooper, and spoke with several national, state and local newspapers and radio programs.

"I'm glad to work at a firm that stands for something," Peters said. "This is a firm that has a soul."

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