

THE **RECORDER**

## Latham & Watkins Adds Regulatory Partner to Strengthen West Coast Crypto Presence

By Michael A. Mora

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### What You Need to Know

- The incoming attorney previously worked at Ketsal and the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission.
- The move comes as the U.S. presidential election is predicted to shake up the regulatory agenda at the SEC.
- The attorney forecasted that regulatory matters would be a focus of litigation in the next couple of years.

Latham & Watkins has added a former Ketsal partner with prior experience at the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission as senior counsel to its emerging companies and growth practice in order to build the Am Law 10 firm's West Coast crypto and blockchain presence.

Zachary Fallon, a partner at Ketsal from April 2018 to November 2024 and senior counsel at the SEC from July 2009 to April 2018, will be a partner in the firm's emerging companies practice, focusing on the crypto and digital assets space. Latham said they had over 1,700 lawyers across 29 offices



Photo: Diego M. Radzinski/ALM

### Latham & Watkins office.

working on fintech-related matters through the third quarter of 2024.

“Most of the folks in our California offices that work in the crypto and blockchain space are straight corporate and finance lawyers,” said Tad J. Freese, a Latham California office managing partner. “Most of our regulatory expertise at Latham sits in our East Coast offices. We thought having Zach join us would round out that team and create a stronger West Coast presence.”

Courtesy photo



**Zachary Fallon of  
Latham & Watkins.**

Fallon said that joining Latham enables him to build his global network, which coincides with a larger litigation trend he has observed in the digital asset arena resulting from increased global adoption of crypto and blockchain and recognition by law firms of its impact.

“More than ever, there is more interest and energy being focused on this area, both from a builder standpoint and a regulatory standpoint, around the world,” Fallon said. “Mainstream adoption is increasing the scrutiny and eventually the legal frameworks building around this space.”

Fallon, who is from California, grew up in an entrepreneurial family. His father, who was originally from Colombia, had a goal of moving to the Golden State and starting a winery. That meant Fallon had a childhood job as an assistant winemaker, producing wine and selling the bottles to businesses.

Fallon earned his undergraduate degree in speech and drama from Trinity College in London, followed by a Master of Arts degree from Guildford School of Acting, now part of the University of Surrey in England. Fallon said performing taught him to “deal with situations on the fly” and helped prepare him to earn his J.D. from the University of California, Berkeley College of Law.

Following graduation, Fallon joined Latham as an associate, where he gravitated to capital markets litigation but found himself drawn to securities laws. He joined the SEC during the Great Recession and one of his roles involved evaluating the SEC’s failure to spot the Bernie Madoff Ponzi scheme, the largest in U.S. history, before it imploded.

Fallon said his biggest accomplishment at the SEC was as the principal drafter of Regulation A, which is centered around an exemption from registration for public offerings. However, after nine years at the SEC, Fallon said he wanted a new challenge and was drawn to the crypto and digital asset space and the ability to help companies comply with securities laws.

Fallon became a founding partner at Ketsal, a law firm and consulting agency that focuses on startups and financial services. Now, Fallon joins Latham as the presidential election is set to determine who will lead the country and set the regulatory agenda for federal agencies such as the SEC.

“It is going to take a lot of work and energy from the industry to focus and get the right attention and feedback on legislative and regulatory efforts,” Fallon said. “That’s why I am here. I want to get that right so people can build and not worry about this regulatory overhang of uncertainty that is bogging down innovation.”