

TEXAS LAWYER

TEXAS ENERGY ATTORNEY OF THE YEAR:

JUSTIN STOLTE,
LATHAM & WATKINS



Texas Lawyer is recognizing Justin Stolte of Latham & Watkins as winner of the Texas Energy Attorney of the Year award. Read a Q&A with him below.

How have recent shifts in energy policy, both at the state and federal level, affected your practice, and how do you help clients adapt to these changes?

My priority has always been to build a strategic, adaptable practice that evolves with our clients' most business critical needs across the energy sector. My background as a petroleum engineer at Chevron and later in business development at Apache gives me a perspective that extends beyond the legal issues to the commercial, technical, and operational considerations driving our clients' decisions. When I became global chair of Latham's energy & infrastructure group, I brought that same "all-of-the-above" approach, positioning our nearly 700 lawyers to advise clients across the full energy and infrastructure ecosystem.

The pace of policy change has only reinforced the value of that approach. At the federal level, the current administration has prioritized domestic energy production and infrastructure development, including natural gas and LNG, while seeking to streamline permitting and reduce regulatory barriers. At the same time, state policies and market dynamics vary significantly across

jurisdictions, and many clients continue to pursue energy transition investments where they are commercially compelling. Rather than building a practice around any particular policy environment, we have built one that can adapt as policy, markets, technology and capital move.

The most significant development today is the extraordinary growth in power demand driven by AI and data centers. That demand brings virtually every part of the energy ecosystem together: natural gas, renewables, nuclear, transmission, storage and other forms of generation, alongside enormous investment in digital infrastructure. It is also creating new regulatory and commercial challenges for development, siting, permitting and rate structures.

My role is to help clients see around those corners—bringing together the right capabilities before an issue becomes an obstacle to investment. In a market where policy can change quickly but the need for reliable, affordable energy continues to grow, our value is not simply helping clients respond to change. We help them anticipate that change, structure around uncertainty, and continue deploying capital into the opportunities that matter most to their businesses.