



Craig I. Nakanishi

PARTNER

Craig has extensive experience representing clients in the petroleum, electric, and alternative/renewable energy industries. He is the Chair of the firm's Energy Group and Co-Chair of the firm's Technology Group.

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📍 Honolulu: 1000 Bishop Street, Suite 1200, Honolulu, HI 96813

Overview

Craig has extensive experience representing clients in the petroleum, electric, and alternative/renewable energy industries.

Craig is a partner at the firm with a focus on energy, public utilities, and business and real property transactions. He is the Chair of the firm's Energy Group and Co-Chair of the firm's Technology Group.

His energy practice includes advising on a wide array of energy issues, including those arising in purchase power negotiations, capital projects, fuel contracts, rate cases, financing matters, infrastructure, mergers and acquisitions, legislation, administrative proceedings, and investigations, as well as providing guidance in the formulation of strategic plans, regulatory frameworks, case management, regulatory interaction, and government affairs.

Craig also represents public utility companies and common carriers providing electric, petroleum, water, wastewater, telecommunication, and transportation services in rate, regulatory, and other proceedings before the Public Utilities Commission of the State of Hawai'i.

In his business and real estate practice, Craig has handled the acquisition or divestiture of capital stock or assets; transactions involving the purchase, sale, and leasing of real property; and the negotiation, documentation, and implementation of a diverse array of contracts and various issues arising in day-to-day operations of his clients. He has advised clients on internal resource and management issues, corporate governance, and reorganization matters, and general corporate matters.

Noteworthy

Experience

- Developing governmental and regulatory strategies for over \$1 billion in projects
- Managing over \$10 billion in complex commercial negotiations and transactions

Practices & Industries

Agriculture & Food Distribution

Banks & Financial Institutions

Construction

Corporate & Business

- Business Organizations
- Government Contracts
- Mergers & Acquisitions

Educational Institutions

Energy

Environmental

Finance

First Amendment, Advertising, Media & Entertainment

Health Care

Hospitality & Retail

Intellectual Property

Land Use, Zoning & Entitlements

- Land Use Violations & Disputes

Litigation

- Commercial Disputes
- Contested Case & Administrative Proceedings

Non-profit & Tax-Exempt Organizations

Real Estate

- Real Estate Transactions

Technology

Water Resources

- Transforming a volunteer organization to a \$4.5 million ongoing operation
- Providing strategic advice to local, national, and multi-national entities on complex matters in petroleum, utility (electric, water, wastewater, telecommunications, and transportation), and alternative energy industries

Awards

- *Best Lawyers*[®] Lawyer of the Year, Energy Regulatory Law, Honolulu, 2026
- *Best Lawyers*[®] Lawyer of the Year, Energy Regulatory Law, Honolulu, 2024
- *Best Lawyers*[®] Lawyer of the Year, Energy Law, Honolulu, 2017, 2023
- Listed in *Best Lawyers*[®], since 2008
- Listed in *Super Lawyers*[®], since 2014

Community Involvement

- Hawaii Technology Development Corporation, Director, Chair of the Board
- Rotary Club of Honolulu, Past Director and Club Secretary
- National Asian Pacific American Bar Association, Past Regional Governor
- Hawaii Strategic Development Corporation (no longer active), Past Director
- Family Programs of Hawaii, Director Emeritus, Past President and Director
- Coalition for a Drug-Free Hawaii, Past President and Director
- Friends of Family Specialty Courts, Past Director
- Pro Bono Counsel for various organizations

Credentials

Education

- J.D. (1986), University of California Davis School of Law, Order of the Coif
- B.B.A. Accounting with distinction (1983), University of Hawai'i, Beta Alpha Psi
- CPA Exam, Passed (1983)

Admissions

- Hawai'i State Bar (1988)
- California State Bar (1986)

Membership

- Hawaii State Bar Association
- State Bar of California
- National Asian Pacific American Bar Association

Clerkship

- Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, Law Clerk to the Honorable Robert Boochever (1986-1987)

Publications

- "Convergence: The Electric Industry and the Internet of Things," *ke kumu* (August 2017) (Co-Author)

Speaking Engagements

- "Solar Purchased Power Agreements," Cades Schutte Corporate Counsel seminar (September 2025) (Speaker)