

## Lippes Mathias Partners Kevin J. Cross, Karl J. Sleight and Dennis C. Vacco Ranked Among City & State's Law Power 100



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**BUFFALO, NEW YORK** – Lippes Mathias is pleased to share that Kevin J. Cross, the firm's managing partner & chairman, as well as partners Karl J. Sleight, the former executive director of the New York State Ethics Commission and Dennis C. Vacco, the former New York State attorney general, together, have been ranked 48th on City & State New York's 2023 Law Power 100 list. The list recognizes the most influential legal professionals in the world of New York politics and government and features high-profile elected officials, powerful prosecutors, high-ranking appointees, partners at prominent firms, defense attorneys, public defenders, legal scholars and others in the profession who advise or oversee governmental bodies, advocate for policy changes or argue cases before our highest courts.

As the firm's managing partner and executive committee leader, Kevin J. Cross is charged with responsibility for all of the firm's offices, attorneys and staff. He is the conduit to the firm's partnership and its executive operations team. Kevin coordinates the firm's strategic direction, implementation of initiatives and goals, and attorney recruitment. One of his main focuses is centered on positive culture and the promotion of a collegial and collaborative professional environment where team members focus on client objectives and the betterment of the firm as a

whole. Kevin has been repeatedly recognized as a skilled and experienced lawyer who concentrates his practice on state and federal business litigation, as well as environmental litigation matters. With over 20 plus years of experience, Kevin has handled cases in many areas of complex high-stakes litigation, consistently obtaining exceptional results for his clients. His work often involves counseling businesses, officers and directors, investors, political organizations, not-for-profit organizations and corporations' in-house counsel. In his litigation practice, Kevin has handled complex contract disputes, significant trust and estates matters, product liability issues, construction concerns and other significant civil litigation.

Karl J. Sleight provides strategic counsel to clients who operate in highly regulated environments that include active government oversight and scrutiny. Karl's experience spans across a broad spectrum of industry sectors including gaming, health care, energy and emerging industries such as cannabis. In addition to advising clients on governmental ethics and lobbying compliance matters, Karl represents individuals, businesses and institutions in complex civil litigation and government administrative investigations against the State Attorney General. He regularly represents clients in high-profile matters containing public and political sensitivities, including numerous Fortune 100 companies as well as private citizens and political figures involved in government inquiries. Karl is also an accomplished trial attorney. Karl has served as counsel to casinos with mobile sports wagering interests on a variety of matters. In the first New York State casino site selection competition (2014), he successfully navigated the process for his clients, which led to his client securing a commercial casino license. Notably, Karl is a licensed horse owner, a member of the New York Thoroughbred Breeders and the managing partner of a racing stable that annually finishes in the top 10 percent by earnings of all licensed owners in North America, which uniquely positions him in his representation of entities in the thoroughbred racing arena. He is a frequent speaker at symposiums on cutting-edge topics in the field of gaming and racing, including the annual August industry conference in Saratoga Springs. Karl has experience serving as special counsel for professional sports leagues, including Major League Baseball.

Former New York State Attorney General, Dennis C. Vacco, is a partner with Lippes Mathias and serves on the firm's executive committee and as the government & corporate investigations practice team co-leader. Dennis was elected New York State Attorney General in 1994 and served until 1999. In 1988, he was appointed United States Attorney for the Western District of New York by President Ronald Reagan after serving 10 years as an assistant district attorney in Erie County. He focuses much of his legal practice on government investigations and compliance work. Dennis works with clients to ensure they are in compliance with the complex and ever-changing laws and regulations of both the state and federal governments. Much of his practice involves state attorney general investigations as well as investigations by the United States Department of Justice, Federal Trade Commission, Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, Securities and Exchange Commission, Commodity Futures Trading Commission and the Department of Homeland Security. Dennis also leads Lippes Mathias' Israel-U.S. cross-border practice which has developed a strategic partnership with a leading Israeli law firm. Dennis, who has traveled frequently to Israel, has represented Israeli businesses that conduct business in the United States. Dennis has also presented at seminars and makes media appearances to discuss the regulatory environment for Israeli businesses in the United States. Dennis from time to time serves as a consultant to clients with matters before state attorney generals. Notably in this regard, he advised a major international corporation that was the focus of a climate change lawsuit brought by the New York attorney general. As New York attorney general, Dennis expanded the traditional role of the attorney general by resurrecting the long-dormant criminal prosecution powers of the office. He then used the expanded purview of his office to form the nation's first internet child pornography unit targeting online predators. His distinguished career has seen him before the United States Supreme Court in the case of *Vacco v. Quill* where he successfully argued that physician-assisted suicide was not a constitutionally protected right. Also in

his role as attorney general, he served as lead negotiator in the multi-state litigation against the tobacco industry and was a principal signatory to the Master Settlement Agreement (“MSA”), and directed other multi-state investigations, including an anti-trust case against Microsoft. Prior to joining Lippes Mathias, Dennis honed his entrepreneurial skills as president of Waste Management of New York, LLC, a subsidiary of Houston-based Waste Management Inc. (“WMI”).

### **About Lippes Mathias LLP**

Lippes Mathias is a full-service law firm with nearly 170 attorneys serving clients regionally, nationally, and internationally. With offices in Buffalo, Albany, Rochester, Long Island, and New York, N.Y.; Greater Toronto Area; Chicago, Ill.; Jacksonville, Fla.; Cleveland, Ohio; San Antonio, Texas; and Washington, D.C., the firm represents publicly and privately-owned companies, private equity and venture capital firms, real estate developers, financial institutions, municipalities, governmental entities, and individuals.

Year after year, Lippes Mathias is proud to be recognized by The Best Lawyers in America®, U.S. News - Best Lawyers®, Super Lawyers and Chambers USA. For more information, visit [www.lippes.com](http://www.lippes.com).

## Related Team



**Kevin J. Cross**

Managing Partner |  
Chairman | Executive  
Committee



**Karl J. Sleight**

Partner



**Dennis C. Vacco**

Partner | Executive  
Committee | Team  
Co-Leader -  
Government &  
Corporate  
Investigations