

TRAILBLAZERS

WHITE COLLAR, REGULATORY & COMPLIANCE

STEVE ROSS

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PIONEER SPIRIT Steve Ross started his career working for the U.S. House of Representatives, eventually serving as general counsel for 1983-93. "I litigated full civil trials, represented witnesses before grand juries, did appellate work and argued before the U.S. Supreme Court. When I left government, I was one of the first to plant a flag and build a congressional investigation practice."

TRAILS BLAZED Ross combines litigation skills with an understanding of the congressional and committee process. "We try to figure out why the committee is holding each investigation or hearing and what they hope to achieve. There is a spectrum of risk factors, and we help our clients avoid making mistakes that will cause bigger headaches." Among his matters, Ross represented the Agua Caliente band of Native Americans in the Jack Abramoff scandal. "We were able to demonstrate to our client and then to the government that the tribe had been a victim rather than a perpetrator. We secured a significant monetary settlement, which doesn't happen often." He also advised former AIG CEO Martin Sullivan. "We were able to steer through all the congressional investigations and matters without any real injury to our client. Representations where the congressional investigation is just one piece of a multifront challenge are more gratifying."

FUTURE EXPLORATIONS Congressional investigation trends come in both waves and tides. "The wave is the partisan and party control matrix. The tide is the longer-term effect of more systemic changes such as the increased level of litigiousness in the congressional investigation world, both with investigations of other government entities and the private sector." There is also a rise in investigations at the state and local level. "And finally, we are seeing the return of the start of congressional investigation-style hearings conducted by state constitutional officers."

