Proskauer



Contact

Eric S. Johnson

Partner

Washington, DC **+1.202.416.5859**

esjohnson@proskauer.com

Eric S. Johnson advises private equity sponsors, sovereign investors, and companies on the national security dimensions of cross-border investment, drawing on nearly a decade of senior leadership in the Department of Justice's (DOJ) National Security Division. He most recently served as Principal Deputy Chief of the Foreign Investment Review Section (FIRS), where he co-led DOJ's investment security work across foreign investment, telecommunications, sensitive data, and emerging and foundational technologies. Eric was at the center of how the U.S. government evaluates and mitigates national security risk, and he brings that inside perspective to clients navigating complex transactions.

Eric counsels clients on navigating regulatory risks posed by national security, telecommunications, and supply chain authorities. To drive deal certainty in sensitive or high-risk environments, he advises on how national security risks are identified, assessed, and mitigated to achieve client objectives, including transaction structuring, risk allocation, mitigation strategy, and engagement with senior U.S. government stakeholders.

While at DOJ, Eric supervised the Department's Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States (CFIUS) engagement, oversaw DOJ's role as Chair of Team Telecom, and played a central role in developing DOJ's Data Security Program — an

emerging regulatory regime governing foreign access to sensitive personal and government data. He built FIRS's compliance and enforcement functions — including a first-of-its-kind interagency capability dedicated to investment security compliance and enforcement — and led the first CFIUS penalties in the program's history, including the largest to date. He regularly engaged with transaction parties and institutional investors on national security risks, including in connection with sovereign-backed investments and other complex cross-border transactions.

Eric's work at DOJ included contributions to Treasury's outbound investment regulations, technical assistance to Congress, and engagement with Five Eyes partners on risks related to emerging technologies and critical infrastructure.

Prior to joining DOJ's National Security Division, Eric served as a senior trial lawyer in DOJ's Civil Division, where he tried multiple cases to verdict.

Representative Government Experience

- Served as the principal career DOJ official on the government's CFIUS review and post-review engagement with TikTok (2019-2024), with continuous involvement across the full lifecycle of the matter. Directed legal, policy, and interagency coordination, including engagement with senior DOJ leadership and congressional stakeholders on the national security implications of foreign-owned social media platforms operating in the United States.
- Supervised DOJ's review of thousands of transactions — valued at trillions of dollars — under CFIUS, Team Telecom, and ICTS authorities, spanning nearly every sector of the economy, including AI, cloud computing, data center infrastructure and services, digital banking, insurance, life sciences, aerospace, data brokerage, mobile applications, and telecommunications. Oversaw compliance with national security mitigation obligations imposed under these authorities.
- Built and led a multi-agency initiative to address national security risks arising from foreign acquisitions of U.S. companies through bankruptcy proceedings, coordinating across DOJ, Treasury, and the FBI, and partnering with the Federal Judicial Center to engage judges and practitioners on emerging risks and mitigation strategies.
- Represented the United States in complex, high-stakes trials, including wrongful death and multi-million-dollar property damage matters.

Practices

Corporate/Transactional, National Security & Foreign Investment Group, Mergers & Acquisitions

Industries

Technology, Media & Telecommunications

Market Solutions

Regulatory & Compliance, Corporate Governance

Education

American University Washington College of Law, J.D.

University of Texas, Austin, B.A.

Admissions & Qualifications

District of Columbia

New York

Clerkships

U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Texas - Hon. A. Joe Fish

Memberships

Advisory Board Member, American University's Tech, Law & Security Program

Awards & Recognition

The Attorney General's Award for Excellence in National Security (2024, 2021)

The Assistant Attorney General's Award for Excellence, National Security Division (2022, 2020, 2019)

Assistant Attorney General's Special Commendation Award, Civil Division (2016)