ArentFox Schiff LLP
Attorneys

Birgit Matthiesen

DIRECTOR, NORTH AMERICAN MANUFACTURING

Birgit is joined by a team of colleagues to assist company executives and business groups with cross-border business interests, ranging from import risk mitigation to broader trade competitive objectives.

Industries

Energy & Cleantech
Automotive & Transportation

Practices

Government Relations
International Arbitration & Dispute Resolution
International Trade & Investment
— Canada-US Cross Border Business Affairs
— Customs & Import Compliance
— Mobility & Advanced Technology

International

Canada

Languages

French

Education

George Mason University, MA, Commercial Policy
Concordia University, BA

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Birgit brings ArentFox Schiff a deep understanding of trade policy and its implications for the corporate sector. That insight can be read in her numerous articles and media interviews over the years but is truly demonstrated in corporate conference rooms across North America.

In short, Birgit and her team untangle the tangle of US trade rules.

“What is over the horizon?” is a common question she addresses when delivering updates for business leaders. Birgit knows that certainty and transparency can drive a company’s competitive advantage. Understanding how trade policy is negotiated and regulated is one of her particular strengths. “Connecting the dots” of fast-paced trade rules is a task for which Birgit is known.

Since joining the D.C. Electric Mobility team at ArentFox Schiff, Birgit has brought her unique skill set to the table. Her popular podcast Five Questions & Five Answers has earned her a loyal following of listeners eager to gain expert perspectives from thought leaders in the electric mobility sector.

This has made Birgit a sought-after speaker at industry conventions and media interviews. As is demonstrated through her writing and speaking on topics such as the USMCA negotiations, US 232 and 301 tariffs, Buy America(n), and Forced Labor trade enforcement provisions, Birgit speaks the language of business and its nexus with trade policy.

Her ability to apply a holistic approach to the needs of cross-border business begins with colleagues at the firm. Birgit participates in a number of key ArentFox Schiff practices and industries, including the International Trade & Investment Group, Electric Mobility Group, and Customs and Import Compliance Group.

** Birgit is not a member of the legal practice.*

Previous Work

Before joining ArentFox Schiff, Birgit served as the Special Advisor to the President and CEO of Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters (CME) as their Washington representative. Her responsibilities included advising CME members on US Congressional and Executive Branch actions that would

have ramifications for Canadian companies with operations on both sides of the border. While at CME, Birgit cultivated a close working relationship with US business associations, federal and state government offices, and Washington think tanks to advance a North American Manufacturing Common Cause advocacy effort.

Before CME, Birgit was on the Trade and Economic Policy staff at the Embassy of Canada in Washington, DC, where she served under a number of distinguished Canadian Ambassadors. During her tenure at the Embassy, Birgit worked directly with North American companies and associations to identify and ease US legislative and regulatory barriers for their cross-border interests. While at the Embassy, Birgit also became well known in Washington for her exceptional advocacy reach and her unique capacity to showcase and promote the importance of North American competitiveness in a challenging global environment.

Publications, Presentations & Recognitions

Presentations

- Speaker at the Great Lakes Sustainable Growth Forum
- Speaker at the 36th Electric Vehicle Symposium & Exposition
- Speaker at EV Innovation & Technology Conference
- Speaker at Electric Mobility Canada's EV Relations Webinar
- Invited to speak at the Canadian Transportation Equipment Association
- Speaker at CONECT's US-Canada Trade in a New Era Seminar
- Queen Elizabeth Diamond Jubilee Award for Public Service 2012
- Interviewed by US and Canadian media (C-SPAN, CTV, CBC, Canadian radio)
- Co-authored with former Canadian Ambassador Michael Kergin a report for the *Canadian International Council* titled "A Border Between Friends"
- Keynote Speaker at the Hamilton Ontario Bay Area Economic Summit

Recognitions

- Top Author: 2023 JD Supra Readers' Choice Awards

5 Questions 5 Answers Podcast

ArentFox Schiff LLP · Five Questions, Five Answers

Life Beyond the Law

Born in Europe, Birgit is a dual Canadian and US citizen. When she's not in D.C., you can find her at home exploring the stunning Green Mountains of Vermont.