



Steven F. Werth

Senior Counsel

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Steven F. Werth is senior counsel in the Bankruptcy & Reorganization practice group at Greenspoon Marder. Mr. Werth has represented debtors and creditors in bankruptcy matters for over two decades. He has worked with individuals and companies in industries ranging from entertainment to janitorial services and manufacturing, regularly representing creditors' committees and small business debtors in Chapter 11 matters.

Mr. Werth has particular expertise in negotiating landlord-tenant disputes that arise in the bankruptcy process, as well as addressing land-use issues and restrictive covenants related to golf course bankruptcies. He regularly navigates foreclosure actions on behalf of real property owners, in relation to office buildings and multi-unit residential properties, reorganizing debt and providing a runway to sale or refinancing.

Mr. Werth works closely with the bankruptcy department of Public Counsel, representing clients pro bono in connection with re-affirmation hearings. He also speaks and writes extensively about student loan debt.

Prior to joining Greenspoon Marder, he spent over 14 years at a boutique bankruptcy firm based in Los Angeles.

Court Admissions

- U.S. District Court, Northern District of California
- U.S. District Court, Southern District of California
- U.S. District Court, Central District of California
- U.S. District Court, Eastern District of California
- U.S. Court of Appeal, Ninth Circuit

Bar Admissions

- California

Education

- J.D., University of Southern California School of Law, 1999
- B.A., Pomona College, 1996

Practice Areas

- Bankruptcy and Reorganization
- Litigation

Representative Experience

Chapter 11 Debtors

- Filed single asset bankruptcy case on behalf of client with 30-unit office building on the eve of foreclosure by lender, providing client an additional 13 months to refinance property or obtain sale.
- Renegotiated leases across Southern California for entertainment client that had been forced to shut down business in 2020 due to the pandemic.
- Handled Chapter 11 reorganization for church amid dispute over governance, allowing issues to be litigated in state court without the risk that property would be dissipated in the meantime.
- Prepared Chapter 11 petition paperwork and assisted Chief Restructuring Officer in evaluating the viability of restructuring an online retail company with significant inventory and numerous transfers to insiders that could be recovered, though the company had ceased operations.

Chapter 7 Debtors & Creditors

- Represented owner of commercial building in Downtown L.A. which brought in approximately \$40k/month in rent, opposite tenant that had commenced bankruptcy case.
- Assisted client undergoing Chapter 7 bankruptcy in selling equity in extensive collection of artwork, including identifying and valuing more than 600 pieces of art.
- Represented recycling business in contentious meetings with creditors during Chapter 7. Coordinated over a period of several months with Chapter 7 Trustee to liquidate significant real estate assets.

Litigation, Mediation & Expert Witness Work

- Commenced litigation against recycling company in receivership on the basis that they had encouraged client to deliver scrap metal worth a significant amount while knowing the company was going out of business and would be unable to pay for these deliveries. Secured settlement through mediation for a material portion of the amount due.
- Prepared expert testimony on behalf of German pharmaceutical company for proceeding in Singapore commercial court, detailing the effects of bankruptcy sales to insiders where their insider status is not disclosed.

Professional and Community Involvement

- Financial Lawyers Conference, Member
- Los Angeles Bankruptcy Forum, Member
- ProVisors, Member

Recognitions

- *Super Lawyers* magazine, "Southern California Super Lawyer," 2023-2024

Publications

- Author, "A Fresh Start," *Los Angeles Lawyer*, December 1, 2020
- Author, "A New Regime in the Preference Litigation," *The Recorder*, March 11, 2020
- Author, "How To Discharge Student Debt: A Look At The Brunner Test," *Law360*, June 11, 2019
- Author, "9th Circ. Rejects Textualist Approach To Bankruptcy Code," *Law360*, May 30, 2018
- Author, "Breathing Room," *Recycling Today*, January 19, 2017
- Author, "The Challenges Facing Distressed Golf Courses," *Bloomberg BNA*, August 4, 2016
- Author, "Developers Eye Creative Golf Course Conversions," *Real Estate Finance and Investment*, August 1, 2016
- Author, "Student Loan Debt Dischargeability – Courts Discuss Limits of Brunner Test," *Bloomberg BNA*, January 28, 2016
- Author, "Stay Violators Now Face Strict Liability in 9th Circuit," *Law360*, January 6, 2016
- Author, "It's Time to Re-Examine Student Loan Debt," *Daily Journal*, December 8, 2015

- Author, "The Changing Landscape of Student Loan Dischargeability," *Law360*, December 4, 2015
- Author, "Trend Catch: WARN Act Claims in Bankruptcy Cases," *Daily Journal*, October 7, 2013
- Author, "9 Ways to Defend a Preference Action Without Really Trying and One More," *Commercial Law World*, November 1, 2011
- Author, "Ponzi Recovery Actions in the Ninth Court," January 1, 2011
- Author, "When Federal Regulations On Claim Priority Conflict With The Bankruptcy Code: Customs Duties"

News

- Seven Greenspoon Marder Attorneys Recognized by Super Lawyers in Southern California for 2024
- Greenspoon Marder Expands Bankruptcy Practice Group With The Addition of Nine New Attorneys in Downtown Los Angeles