

An ex-entrepreneur who built and sold his first business before returning to law school, Rick believes the practice of law must be more focused on achieving strategic value for the client.

From his entrepreneurial origins, to his experience litigating complex commercial disputes at large law firms, to the political and government experience gained working in the US Senate and as a political appointee in Washington DC, Rick believes in leveraging all of the resources and experience at his disposal to help his clients achieve their goals.

Biography

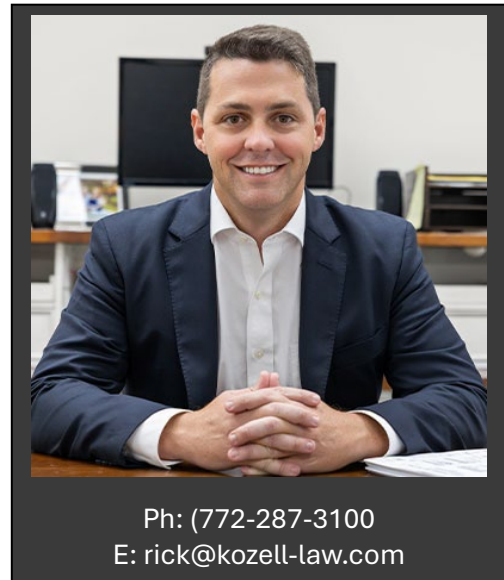
Rick Kozell is a graduate of Wake Forest University, where he played varsity soccer and majored in Business Administration. After graduation, Rick returned home to start his first business in the marine services industry. As an entrepreneur, Rick experienced Florida's complex regulatory, tax, and legal environments which he now navigates on behalf of his clients.

In 2006 Rick sold his company and returned to law school, graduating from Georgetown Law Center. While there, he clerked in the United States Senate, working for the Senate Committee for the Judiciary, Senator George LeMieux, and Senator Tom Coburn.

After graduating law school, Rick went to work at two of South Florida's large commercial law firms, where he sharpened his skills practicing in the area of complex litigation. His early experience gave him a strong background across subject matters, including real estate, creditors' rights, contracts, secured transactions, business disputes, and Constitutional claims.

In 2014, Rick was appointed to serve as counsel to Commissioner Heather L. MacDougall of the Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission in Washington, DC. In that role, he counseled the Commissioner in cases involving Constitutional and administrative issues facing large and small businesses.

In 2016, Rick ran for the United States Congress, seeking to represent Florida's 18th Congressional District here on the Treasure Coast. While unsuccessful in that campaign, Rick was fortunate to



earn many major endorsements from respected business leaders, members of Congress, United States Senators, and business groups. Rick has remained politically active since that time, in the belief that participation in our government is vital to our children's future.

Following his congressional race, Rick founded the Law Office of Rick Kozell where he brings his diverse background to bear representing clients. The Law Office of Rick Kozell was founded on the belief that the practice of law must be more business oriented and more client-centric. Rick is laser focused on that mission in every matter he handles.

The bulk of Rick's practice focuses on all aspects of transactional real estate: residential and commercial closings, title, financing, buyer and seller representation, contracts and negotiations, 1031 transactions, property tax appeals, SBA loans, refinance, and lender representation. Rick is an authorized title agent for Fidelity National Title Insurance Company and Attorneys Title Insurance Fund. Rick also handles, on a selective basis, complex commercial, real estate, and Constitutional litigation matters.

Rick has been involved in countless charitable, community, political, and business organizations locally, including the Martin County Chamber of Commerce, the Marine Industries Association of Palm Beach County, the Jupiter Tequesta Athletic Association, the Palm Beach Republican Club, the Republican Club of the Palm Beaches, Place of Hope, Martin County Realtors Association, and the Jupiter Tequesta Hobe Sound Association of Realtors. He also served as counsel to Senator Rick Scott in Martin County during the 2018 recount.

Rick is a member of the Real Property Probate and Trusts Litigation Section of the Florida Bar; and he is admitted to practice in all Florida Courts, the District Court for the Southern District of Florida, and the District Court for the Middle District of Florida.

The following is a list of Representative Matters from Rick's practice:

Constitutional Challenge to Illegal Martin County Regulation

In 2022, Rick brought a constitutional action in federal court challenging a Martin County law illegally regulating small businesses. Rick was successful in obtaining a preliminary injunction blocking the law, which resulted in the County abandoning the illegal scheme as affecting his client. The case concluded in 2024 with Rick's client recovering \$250,000 in attorneys' fees from the Martin County Board of County Commissioners.

Represented Real Estate Brokerage Defrauded out of Commission on \$8.6 million Waterfront Home

In 2025, Rick represented a boutique real estate brokerage defrauded out of a brokerage commission. Rick brought suit for breach of contract and fraud after uncovering that the buyer had falsified public records to cover his tracks. Rick successfully asserted a claim against escrow proceeds, resulting in the surrender of the full commission owed.

Represented Developer Wrongfully Denied Certificate of Occupancy by Town Government

In 2024, Rick successfully represented a developer against a local government after the Town wrongfully withheld a development approval and refused to issue a certificate of occupancy for a newly constructed home. The matter involved a complex factual issue regarding a local utility company's demand to relocate a sewer line as a condition of issuing the certificate of occupancy. Rick was successful in establishing a damaging record pre-suit, resulting in abandonment of the Town's position and issuance of all approvals without the need for protracted litigation.

Civil Theft Wire Fraud Claim Against Money Mule in International Conspiracy

In 2016, Rick represented the victim of wire fraud perpetrated by members of an international crime ring. Through strategic planning prior to litigation, Rick obtained a pre-judgment writ of attachment against real property, before pursuing and recovering a civil theft judgment for three times the amount stolen plus all attorneys' fees; and then levying execution against real property. The case concluded in 2020 with Rick's client recovering three times the amounts stolen plus attorneys' fees.

Defeat of Fraudulent Bankruptcy and Competing Lien Claim

As a bankruptcy proceeding ancillary to civil litigation, Rick litigated a fraudulent bankruptcy petition filed by a debtor in an attempt to discharge a lien held by Rick's client. Rick ultimately defeated the fraudulent bankruptcy and then defeated a lien held by a competing creditor, in a matter involving complex questions surrounding priority of liens among bona fide secured creditors. Rick ultimately prevailed on all issues resulting in full recovery by his client.

Defended Execution Against Homestead in Case Involving Novel Florida Constitutional Question

In 2020, Rick was engaged after entry of a \$10 million judgment against a small business, when the creditor sought to seize assets from the deceased corporate officer's wife. Rick handled the defense of the execution action, which involved complex questions as to the protection afforded to homestead property under the Florida Constitution. Rick defended the action before the trial court; pursued appeal of Constitutional homestead question to the Fourth District Court of Appeal; and ultimately sought certiorari review by Florida's Supreme Court.

Asset Seizure on Behalf of Creditor

From 2012 until 2014, Rick was part of the team representing a national financial institution in an action following default by a commercial borrower. Rick's role was discovering and pursuing assets available to satisfy the multi-million-dollar judgment. In a contentious proceeding supplementary lasting two years, Rick was ultimately successful in levying execution against substantial assets including a multi-story office building, stock shares, classic cars, and vessels, resulting in the surrender of additional assets to satisfy the judgment.

Defense Against Defamation Claims

From 2012 until 2014, Rick participated in defending claims brought by a plaintiff business against a non-profit business rating agency for allegedly unfair grades and ratings. Facing claims for

defamation and violation of Florida's Deceptive and Unfair Trade Practices Act (FDUTPA), Rick was successful in obtaining a dismissal with prejudice based on the First Amendment protection afforded to statements of mixed opinion.

Defense of Claims for Fraud and Non-Disclosure Against Real Estate Brokerage

From 2010 until 2012, Rick was part of the defense of a residential real estate broker sued for fraud and non-disclosure of property defects. In multi-party litigation, Rick was successful in obtaining a full dismissal with prejudice based on a contractual waiver argument and then obtaining an order entitling the client to recover its attorneys' fees as a prevailing party.