

Panelist Biographies



Mark Lightner

MODERATOR

*Head of Special
Situations Legal
Research, CreditSights*

Mark Lightner is Head of Special Situations Legal Research at CreditSights and an adjunct professor of law. He frequently publishes research for institutional investors at the intersection of law and finance, including bankruptcy and restructuring, mass torts, litigation risk, and regulatory developments. Prior to joining CreditSights, Mark was a restructuring attorney at Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP and Morrison & Foerster LLP, where he advised senior management, generals counsel, and boards on complex in- and out-of-court restructurings and related litigation.

Mark's experience includes representing Puerto Rico, where he wrote its emergency moratorium law and drafted large portions of PROMESA; serving as counsel to the court-appointed bankruptcy examiner in Lehman Brothers; and representing debtors, committees, and other stakeholders in major Chapter 11 and municipal matters, including the City of Detroit. Mark clerked for two judges, including one on the U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the Southern District of New York, and teaches semester-long courses on bankruptcy, debtor/creditor law, and municipal debt restructuring.

Hon. Robert D.
Drain

U.S. Bankruptcy Court
for the Southern District
of New York (ret.)

Robert Drain served for over 20 years as a United States Bankruptcy Judge for the Southern District of New York, retiring on December 31, 2022. At the time of his appointment to the bench in 2002, he had long been a partner in the Bankruptcy Department of Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison. After leaving the bench, he was Of Counsel at Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher, & Flom LLP, conducting a broad-based restructuring practice. He left Skadden on December 31, 2025. Since then, he has continued to serve as a mediator in chapter 11 cases in various jurisdictions and as a member of a three-person special committee with comprehensive powers over a chapter 11 debtor in the Southern District of Texas.

On the bench, he had a diverse and active docket of individual, small business, moderately sized, and mega chapter 11 cases, as well as often serving as a mediator. For several years he was an adjunct professor at St. John's University School of Law's LLM in Bankruptcy Program and an adjunct professor at Pace University School of Law, and he has lectured in programs at the Federal Judicial Center, the NCBJ, ABI, AIRA, TMA, PLI, Federal Bar Council, the American College of Bankruptcy, Columbia University School of Law, Chicago Law School, and national, local and international bar associations, and has published on several bankruptcy-related topics, including in the American Bankruptcy Law Journal and the American Bankruptcy Institute Law Review, as well as authored a few hundred written opinions. Contact: robertdrain84@gmail.com

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**Isaac Sasson**

Partner, Corporate
Department, Paul
Hastings LLP

Isaac Sasson is a partner in Paul Hastings' Financial Restructuring practice and is based in the firm's New York office. He focuses on restructuring and creditors' rights across an array of industries, including energy, cryptocurrency, technology, healthcare, entertainment and media. Isaac has considerable experience representing creditors, ad hoc committees, official committees of unsecured creditors, private equity funds and private companies in distressed situations. To that end, Isaac has been involved in some of the largest bankruptcies over the past decade, including FTX, Caesars Entertainment Operating Company, the Puerto Rico Sales Tax and Financing Corporation (COFINA), and Intelsat. He also has significant experience in complex litigation and liability management transactions.

**Christopher
Hopkins**

Partner, Paul, Weiss,
Rifkind, Wharton &
Garrison LLP

A partner in the Restructuring & Debt Capital Solutions Group, Chris has broad experience representing companies, ad hoc groups and individual creditors in chapter 11 cases, out-of-court restructurings, cross-border engagements, and other distressed transactions.

Chris is frequently recognized for his exceptional work. The *American Bankruptcy Institute* named him among its 2025 "40 Under 40" Emerging Leaders in Insolvency Practice, which identifies the top 40 restructuring industry professionals in the U.S. under the age of 40. *Turnarounds & Workouts* acknowledged his work in the restructuring of Rite Aid in their "Successful Restructurings of 2024" and "Largest Chapter 11 Cases of 2024" lists. He was named a Law360 2024 Rising Star, highlighting the top Bankruptcy lawyers under age 40, and has been listed in *Lawdragon's* "500 Leading Global Bankruptcy & Restructuring Lawyers," which recognizes the top attorneys helping companies navigate ailing economies and uncertain times. Chris co-authored, alongside fellow Paul, Weiss attorney Lara Luo, an article for *Chambers and Partners* called "Debtor in Possession Financing Trends in the United States – Equity-Based Terms and Fees." Chris has been recognized by *The Legal 500* for his work in the restructuring space and by *Lawdragon* in "500 X – The Next Generation 2023," which recognizes future leaders in the legal profession.

**Robert White**

Managing Director,
Jefferies LLC

Robert White has over 26 years of experience in restructuring and distressed investing. He has been a Managing Director at Jefferies for 17 years. Prior to Jefferies, Mr. White was a Director on Barclays Distressed Debt trading desk and a Senior Vice President in the Restructuring Group at Chanin Capital Partners.

Mr. White has completed over 100 recapitalization and restructuring transactions including representing debtors and creditors involving in court and out of court restructuring transactions. He has advised clients involving restructuring and liability management transactions in a broad swath of industries including Consumer and Retail, Media and Telecommunications, Industrials, Hospitality and Real Estate, and Metals and Mining.

Mr. White has advised Official Committees of Unsecured Creditors in some of the largest Chapter 11 cases including: Rite Aid, JC Penney, Arch Coal, Claire's Stores, Extended Stay Hotels, Eastman Kodak, Hayes Lemmerz, and Momentive Performance Materials. His recent company side experience includes advising on M&A, capital raising, and restructuring transactions for Hospitality Investors Trust, Hello Bello, Dansons, Troika Media, Timex Group, Total Play Communications, Metinvest, Blackhawk Mining, and AT&T on its acquisition of spectrum assets from Echostar Corporation.