

Trump Nominated Matthew Orso, An Anti-Abortion, Crypto-Friendly Lawyer To The Western District Of North Carolina

SUMMARY:

In August 2025, President Trump [announced](#) the nomination of Matthew Orso to the Western District of North Carolina. Orso is a partner at Troutman Pepper Locke where he [represents clients](#) subject to regulatory oversight, including from the DOJ, SEC, and IRS. Orso [defended](#) an unnamed sitting congressman in investigations by the House Ethics Committee, DOJ's Public Integrity Section, and the U.S. Attorney's Office—demonstrating his commitment to protecting politicians from accountability.

Orso has written and [spoken](#) extensively about cryptocurrency, indicating he may provide a crypto-friendly voice on the bench while the Trump family seeks to expand their personal crypto dealings.

Orso [served](#) as president or a board member of the St. Thomas More Society of Charlotte, North Carolina, from 2018 to 2024. In 2013, Orso co-authored coverage of the Department of Health and Human Service's mandate requiring employees to provide contraception access, winning an award from the Catholic Press Association for religious liberty issue coverage.

President Trump Nominated Big Law Partner Matthew Orso To The Western District Of North Carolina

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August 2025: Trump Nominated Matthew Orso To The Western District Of North Carolina. "President Donald Trump announced four judicial nominees for vacant posts on North Carolina's district courts in Truth Social posts on Friday. Trump said he is nominating Matthew Orso and Susan Courtwright Rodriguez to the Western District Court and David Bragdon and Lindsey Freeman to the Middle District Court. If all are confirmed, he would have twice as many appointees to North Carolina's district courts as in his first term." [NC Newsline, [8/25/25](#)]

Orso Is A Partner At Troutman Pepper Locke And Previously Clerked For Judge Robert J. Conrad, Then The Western District's Chief Judge. "Matt Orso is a partner at Troutman Pepper Locke LLP. Earlier in his career, he clerked for Judge Robert J. Conrad Jr. of the US District Court for the Western District." [Carolina Journal, [8/25/25](#)]

As A Big Law Partner, Orso Defended Clients Involved In DOJ, SEC, And IRS Investigations

Throughout His Career, And As A Partner At Troutman Pepper Locke, Orso Defended Clients Involved In Investigations By The U.S. Department Of Justice (DOJ), Securities & Exchange Commission (SEC), State Attorneys General, And Internal Revenue Service (IRS). "Matthew Emile Orso Partner [...] Matt helps clients manage legal, financial, and reputational risks arising from regulatory scrutiny. He defends companies and individuals in criminal and civil white collar enforcement actions, conducts high-stakes internal

investigations, and counsels on compliance with BSA/AML laws and regulations. Matt offers comprehensive representation to clients facing inquiries from, and enforcement actions brought by, government and industry regulators, including the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), Securities & Exchange Commission (SEC), state attorneys general, Internal Revenue Service (IRS), and the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency (OCC), among others. He guides these clients through high-profile investigations and criminal and civil litigation, including advising on responses to federal grand jury subpoenas and law enforcement inquiries, preparing witnesses for trial and grand jury testimony, and representation at trial.” [Troutman Pepper Locke, accessed [9/5/25](#)]

Orso Defended An Unnamed Sitting Congressman In Investigations From The House Ethics Committee, DOJ’s Public Integrity Section, And The U.S. Attorney’s Office, Resulting In No Charges. “Defended a sitting congressman in investigations by the House Ethics Committee, DOJ’s Public Integrity Section, and the U.S. Attorney’s Office, resulting in a declination of prosecution with no filing of charges or Office of Congressional Ethics referral.” [Troutman Pepper Locke, accessed [9/5/25](#)]

Orso Represented An Unnamed Large National Bank In A Civil Investigative Demand (CID) Issued By Nebraska’s Attorney General Relating To The Bank’s Alleged Financial Exploitation Of An Elderly Customer. “Represents a large national bank in response to a civil investigative demand (CID) issued by the attorney general of Nebraska relating to the bank’s alleged financial exploitation of elderly customer.” [Troutman Pepper Locke, accessed [9/5/25](#)]

Orso Represented A “Major Financial Institution” In Enforcement Actions Brought By The DOJ, SEC, And Multiple State Attorneys General. “Defended a major financial institution in enforcement actions brought by the DOJ, SEC, and multiple state attorneys general.” [Troutman Pepper Locke, accessed [9/5/25](#)]

Orso Has Written And Spoken Extensively About Cryptocurrency, Indicating He Could Be A Crypto-Friendly Voice On The Bench While Trump’s Personal Crypto Ventures Expand

In An Interview About The Cryptocurrency Industry, Orso Shared His Excitement About Emerging Crypto Trends, Like The Tokenization Of Assets, And Noted That Government Enforcement Could Pose Existential Threats To Crypto Companies

Orso Said He Was Intrigued When Introduced To Crypto And His Interest Blossomed After Working With Fintech Clients. “I was first introduced to crypto by my older brother. His infectious excitement and repeated lectures about blockchain, Bitcoin, and other digital assets piqued my interest. I was quite skeptical at first. But the more I learned about it, the more intrigued I became. Eventually, I had the opportunity to work with fintech clients that intersected the industry or that were considering holding or taking custody of digital assets. My interest and engagement in the industry blossomed from there.” [Medium, Authority Magazine, [7/21/23](#)]

Orso Said That Government Enforcement “Can Pose Existential Threats To Young Crypto Companies.” “Blockchain companies can gain a competitive edge by working to comply with existing regulations and agency guidance, without compromising the core model that makes a company attractive to its customers and users. Government enforcement and cybercriminals can pose existential threats to young crypto companies, and users will increasingly take these risks into account before placing their assets on a given platform.” [Medium, Authority Magazine, [7/21/23](#)]

Orso Said He Was Most Excited About The Tokenization Of Assets. “What are the 3 things that most excite you about the blockchain industry in general? Why? The tokenization of assets. Tokenization will have

immense future impacts on everything from investing and liquidity to programmable assets to everyday purchases. I'm excited to see how this develops over the next several years and how it has the potential to make everyday life easier." [Medium, Authority Magazine, [7/21/23](#)]

At Troutman Pepper Locke, Orso Joined Podcasts And Authored Notes Discussing Crypto Trends

January 2025: Orso Joined The Podcast "The Crypto Exchange" To Discuss A Fifth Circuit Decision Regarding The Cryptocurrency Tumbler Tornado Cash Which Held That The Office Of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) Exceeded Its Authority By Sanctioning Immutable Smart Contracts Created By Tornado Cash. "In this episode of the Crypto Exchange, Ethan Ostroff is joined by colleagues Pete Jeydel and Matt Orso to discuss a recent landmark decision from the Fifth Circuit regarding Tornado Cash. The court ruled that the Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) exceeded its authority by sanctioning immutable smart contracts created by Tornado Cash. This decision has significant implications for the regulation of decentralized finance (DeFi) technologies under the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA)." [Troutman Pepper Locke, [1/16/25](#)]

Orso Co-Authored A Note About Cryptocurrency's Use In Illicit Activities, Such As Terrorist Financing. "Cryptocurrency, with its anonymity and decentralization, has revolutionized financial transactions. However, it has also opened doors for illicit activities, such as terrorist financing. Below we explore the role of cryptocurrency in terrorist financing, focusing on Hamas, a U.S.-designated terrorist organization." [Matthew Orso et al. - Troutman Pepper Locke, [1/17/24](#)]

Orso Co-Authored A Note Explaining The SEC's Enforcement Against Kraken, A Major Cryptocurrency Exchange. "On November 20, the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) instituted a civil enforcement action against Kraken, a major U.S. cryptocurrency exchange. The SEC alleged Kraken operated as an unregistered broker, dealer, exchange, and clearing agency, in violation of the Securities Exchange Act. The SEC's lawsuit aims to prohibit Kraken from continuing these activities and seeks an unspecified amount of civil monetary penalties." [Matthew Orso et al. - Troutman Pepper Locke, [12/6/23](#)]

Orso Co-Authored A Note Explaining The DOJ's \$4.3 Billion Settlement With Binance.com. "On November 21, the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) unsealed its criminal indictment against Binance.com (Binance), the world's largest cryptocurrency exchange, and its CEO, Changpeng 'CZ' Zhao (CZ). The indictment against Binance contains three charges: (1) conspiracy to violate the Bank Secrecy Act (BSA) by failing to implement and maintain an effective anti-money laundering (AML) program; (2) conducting an unlicensed money services business; and (3) willful violation of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA). On the same day, at a press conference also attended by Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen and Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC) Chairman Russ Behnam, Attorney General Merrick Garland announced Binance pled guilty to all charges, and the DOJ is requiring Binance to pay approximately \$4.3 billion in criminal penalties and forfeiture." [Matthew Orso et al. - Troutman Pepper Locke, [11/30/23](#)]

Orso Co-Authored A Note About California's New Regulation Of Crypto. "On October 13, California Governor Gavin Newsom (D) signed Assembly Bill 39 (Digital Financial Assets Law). This new law broadly empowers the California Department of Financial Protection and Innovation (DFPI) to govern 'digital financial asset business activity' and prohibits entities from engaging in such activity with California residents without obtaining a license from the DFPI, among other criteria." [Matthew Orso et al. - Troutman Pepper Locke, [11/6/23](#)]

Orso Co-Authored A Note About The SEC's Dismissal Of Claims Against Ripple Labs, Inc., For Allegedly Aiding And Abetting Ripple's Violations Of The Securities Act With Respect To Its "Institutional Sales" Of XRP. "On October 19, the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) dismissed its claims against Ripple Labs, Inc. (Ripple) executives Bradley Garlinghouse and Christian Larsen for allegedly

aiding and abetting Ripple's violations of the Securities Act with respect to its "institutional sales" of XRP. The Southern District of New York had deemed 'institutional sales' to be unregistered securities in its July summary judgment decision, however, at that time the court reserved judgment as to the aiding and abetting claims against the executives. The matter was set for trial in 2024." [Matthew Orso et al. - Troutman Pepper Locke, [10/20/23](#)]

September 2023: Orso Joined The Podcast "The Crypto Exchange" To Discuss The Treasury Department's Illicit Finance Risk Assessment Of Decentralized Finance (DeFi). "In this episode of The Crypto Exchange, Troutman Pepper Partner Ethan Ostroff welcomes his colleagues Mike Lowe and Matt Orso to discuss the U.S. Department of Treasury's Illicit Finance Risk Assessment of Decentralized Finance (DeFi), which assesses how illicit actors are abusing DeFi services, as well as vulnerabilities unique to DeFi services. With this assessment, the Treasury has signaled its intent to increase focus on the DeFi sector, expecting DeFi market actors to integrate anti-money laundering (AML) and counter-terrorism financing (CFT) compliance into their services." [Troutman Pepper Locke, [9/7/23](#)]

Orso Co-Authored A Note About A New Bill Requiring Federal Regulators To Create Risk-Focused Examination And Review Processes For Cryptocurrency Oversight. "On July 13, U.S. Senators Cynthia Lummis (R-WY), Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY), Elizabeth Warren (D-MA), and Roger Marshall (R-KS) introduced an amendment to the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) that seeks to examine the adequacy of current anti-money laundering obligations (set forth in the Bank Secrecy Act (BSA)) as applied to crypto assets, crypto asset kiosks, payment stablecoin issuers, and crypto asset mixers." [Matthew Orso et al. - Troutman Pepper Locke, [7/25/23](#)]

Trump Has Developed A Personal Business In Crypto, And Thus A Vested Interest In Crypto-Friendly Litigation

Crypto Has Turbocharged The Trumps' Monetization of Their Name, Adding An Estimated \$2.9 Billion To Trump's Fortune. "President Trump's venture into crypto products has increased his family's wealth by billions in the last six months, according to a new report, as his administration continues to loosen the federal government's regulatory approach to the digital currency industry as a whole. The group State Democracy Defenders Action estimated in a new report that the president's crypto holdings now represent nearly 40% of his net worth — or approximately \$2.9 billion." [CBS News, [5/2/25](#)]

September 2025: A New Crypto Token Issued By The Trump Family Boosted Their Wealth By Roughly \$5 Billion. "A new cryptocurrency issued by the Trump family's World Liberty Financial and that started trading this week has boosted the family's wealth on paper by roughly \$5 billion despite the digital token sinking in its first two days of being listed on the exchange. The crypto, called WLFI, reached a high of about 40 cents after launching on Monday, according to data from CoinMarketCap. By Tuesday morning, the value of the token had fallen to as low as about 21 cents, down 48% from its peak, before recovering to about 23 cents in the afternoon." [CBS News, [9/2/25](#)]

July 2025: Trump Media Sought The SEC's Approval To Launch A Crypto Exchange-Traded Fund. "Trump Media & Technology Group (DJT.O), is looking to launch an exchange-traded fund that will invest in multiple crypto tokens, including bitcoin, ether, solana and ripple, a filing with the U.S. markets regulator showed on Tuesday." [Reuters, [7/8/25](#)]

Orso Served As President Of A Catholic Lawyers Group And Co-Authored Coverage Of Religious Liberty Issues Surrounding HHS's 2013 Contraception Service Coverage Mandate

Orso Served As A President And Board Member Of The St. Thomas More Society, A Catholic Lawyers Group

2018-2024: Orso Served As A President And Board Member Of The St. Thomas More Society.

Volunteering



Past President and Board Memembr

Federal Bar Association, Western District of North Carolina Chapter
Jun 2019 – Jun 2024 · 5 yrs 1 mo



Past President and Board Member

St. Thomas More Society of Charlotte, NC
Jan 2018 – Jan 2024 · 6 yrs

[LinkedIn, Matthew Orso, accessed [9/8/25](#)]

The St. Thomas More Society Is A Catholic Society Of Lawyers Which “Seeks To Defend Life, Family And Religious Freedom.” “The 2024 Red Mass was organized by the St. Thomas More Society of Charlotte. Named for the patron saint of lawyers, the society promotes Catholic virtue in practicing law and seeks to defend life, family and religious freedom. The Charlotte group is sponsored by members of the North Carolina Bar who believe that the legal profession is a high calling in which the principal objective of every lawyer should be to promote and seek justice in society. Through fellowship with like-minded lawyers, the group strives to support its members in their spiritual growth and in incorporating Christian principles and the pursuit of truth in their spiritual and professional lives. The Charlotte group also encourages interfaith understanding and community, in part through the Red Mass, to invoke the assistance of the Holy Spirit for the judiciary, lawyers, law enforcement and other members of the legal community.” [Catholic News Herald, [9/12/24](#)]

Orso Co-Authored Coverage Of Supposed Religious Liberty Issues Surrounding HHS’s 2013 Contraception Service Coverage Mandate

2013: Belmont Abbey College Filed A Lawsuit Against An HHS Mandate Requiring Employees To Be Provided Contraception And Abortion Access. “Today Becket filed a lawsuit on behalf of Belmont Abbey College, a Catholic liberal arts college founded by Benedictine monks, against the administration’s HHS mandate. Belmont Abbey College now faces hefty IRS fines unless it complies with the mandate’s requirement to provide its employees with contraception, sterilization, and abortion-inducing drugs that violate its Catholic beliefs.” [Becket, [11/20/13](#)]

Matthew Orso Won Best Coverage Of Religious Liberty Issues In Three Articles About The Department Of Health And Human Services From The Catholic Press Association Awards For 2013 Coverage Of HHS Mandates.

2013 Catholic Press Association Awards

Issued by Catholic Press Association of the US and Canada · Jun 2014



Associated with Diocese of Charlotte

First Place, Best Coverage of Religious Liberty Issues: for "HHS mandate forces people to act against their convictions," "Take your place in the battle for religious freedom," "Belmont Abbey College files new lawsuit against HHS mandate" by Patricia Guilfoyle, SueAnn Howell and Matthew Orso
Third Place, Best Feature Story (among diocesan newspapers over 40,000 circulation): for "'Three bishops in one place, who can miss that?!'" by SueAnn Howell
Honorable Mention, Best Web/Print Combo Package: for "2013 Eucharistic Congress" by Catholic News Herald staff
Honorable Mention, Best Web/Print Combo Package: for "The March Goes On" by SueAnn Howell, Gretchen Filz, Anthony Perlas, Ruben Tamayo, Kimberly Bender and Patricia Guilfoyle

[LinkedIn, SueAnn Howell, accessed [9/8/25](#)]

2013: Orso Worked In The Charlotte, North Carolina Area.



McGuireWoods LLP

11 yrs 5 mos



Partner

2018 - May 2023 · 5 yrs 5 mos

Charlotte, North Carolina, United States



Associate

2012 - 2018 · 6 yrs

Charlotte, North Carolina Area

[LinkedIn, Matthew Orso, accessed [9/8/25](#)]

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