



Chris Israel – ACG Advocacy

Chris Israel is a Senior Partner at ACG Advocacy and is also the co-lead of the firm’s technology and intellectual property group.

He joined ACG in 2010, after serving in the George W. Bush Administration as Deputy Chief of Staff to the Secretary of Commerce and later becoming the first U.S. International Intellectual Property Enforcement Coordinator.

At ACG Advocacy, Chris works with a diverse range of clients including some of the largest and most innovative companies in the world to support their efforts to build a policy environment in the U.S. that promotes and protects their investments in intellectual property. He has also developed a unique focus leading a coalition of top venture capitalists and innovative startups to pursue a policy agenda that has led to improvements in tax policy, investments in R&D, and strengthening patent protection.

Chris maintains a leadership profile working on IP and innovation issues and has been a frequent public speaker and has testified before Congress multiple times both as an Administration official and since he left public service. He was previously named one of the 50 “Most Influential People on IP” by Managing Intellectual Property magazine.

His international experience in government, particularly in working with China, has enabled him to successfully engage clients on global trade and technology matters ranging from the negotiations of trade agreements, tariff policy, and engaging international organizations. His client relationships have included automakers, global manufacturing companies, shipping companies, and Chinese e-commerce and social media platforms seeking to better understand the U.S. market.

Chris’ experience leading coalitions has also included serving as Executive Director of the musicFIRST Coalition during the lead-up to the passage of the landmark Music Modernization Act. During this time he was named to Medium’s inaugural “Power 10” list of music policy leaders.

Within ACG Advocacy, he provides guidance on the firm’s day-to-day interaction with all its clients and helps lead ACG’s extensive policy research team. He has also launched the firm’s podcast focused on policy trends and developments in Washington.

Earlier in his career, Chris worked on international policy issues at Time Warner where he was part of a team that supported then-CEO, Gerald Levin, to develop the Global Business Dialogue on E-Commerce a

ground-breaking global organization of CEOs from the U.S., EU, and Asia that developed industry best practices on matters such as online privacy, cross border data flows, and online taxation.

Prior to Time Warner, he served on Capitol Hill as a legislative aide to U.S. Representatives Jan Meyers (R-KS) and Todd Tiahrt (R-KS).

Chris received his B.A. from the University of Kansas and an M.B.A. from The George Washington University.



Sharon Israel – USPTO

Sharon Israel is the Chief Policy Officer and Director for International Affairs at the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO). In this position, she serves as a policy advisor to the Under Secretary of Commerce for Intellectual Property and Director of the USPTO and Deputy Under Secretary of Commerce for IP and Deputy Director of the USPTO. She oversees the USPTO's domestic and international policy matters related to intellectual property (IP) protection and enforcement and on IP-related trade issues, including proposed legislation and international activities of the U.S. She also oversees the Office of Policy and International Affairs' (OPIA) education and training programs through the Global Intellectual Property Academy (GIPA); global advocacy initiatives through the IP Attaché Program; and economic analyses through the Office of the Chief Economist, among her many duties.

Prior to joining the USPTO, Ms. Israel was a partner at Shook, Hardy & Bacon L.L.P., specializing in intellectual property law with an emphasis in patent litigation. During her career, she has litigated patents related to a variety of industries and technologies, including wireless communications, oil field equipment, consumer electronics, chemicals, and medical devices.

Ms. Israel has served in leadership roles such as the President of the American Intellectual Property Law Association; Chair of the State Bar of Texas Intellectual Property Law Section; President of the Houston Intellectual Property Law Association; President of The Honorable Nancy F. Atlas Intellectual Property American Inn of Court; President of the Foundation for Advancement of Diversity in IP Law; Membership Officer of the American Bar Association's Section of Intellectual Property Law; and on the Board of Governors for the Federal Circuit Bar Association.

Ms. Israel received her law degree and Masters of Business Administration from Emory University. She received a Bachelor of Science degree in electrical engineering from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.



Stevan Mitchell – U.S. Department of Commerce

Stevan D. Mitchell is the Director of the International Trade Administration's Office of Intellectual Property Rights (OIPR) at the U.S. Department of Commerce.

OIPR promotes foreign market opportunities for export of U.S. products and services through advancements in trade policy and provides direct assistance to companies seeking to protect and enforce intellectual property rights in foreign markets. OIPR administers the STOPfakes.gov program and website, and partners with USEACs and USPTO, along with the National IPR Coordination Center, on STOPfakes.gov Road Shows – a series of outreach events around the country to increase companies' awareness of IPR issues and remedies.

Previously Mr. Mitchell served as Vice President, Intellectual Property Policy for the Entertainment Software Association (ESA). His responsibilities included leading video game industry engagement on matters of domestic and international trade, intellectual property and enforcement policy.

Prior to joining the ESA, Mr. Mitchell served as Senior Counsel to the Computer Crime and Intellectual Property Section (CCIPS) of the U.S. Department of Justice, and served as a Member of the President's Commission on Critical Infrastructure Protection (PCCIP). As a PCCIP Commissioner, Mr. Mitchell was responsible for many of the legal studies and recommendations produced by the Commission, including Legal Foundations, a 14-volume study of legal issues associated with infrastructure protection.

Previously, as a Trial Attorney with the Computer Crime and Intellectual Property Section, Mr. Mitchell litigated cases under the Computer Fraud and Abuse Act and provided oversight, consultation and guidance on investigations and prosecutions involving illegal uses of technology. Mr. Mitchell also co-authored the second edition of the Department of Justice's intellectual property rights prosecution manual.



Maria Strong – U.S. Copyright Office

Maria Strong is the Associate Register of Copyrights and Director of Policy and International Affairs for the United States Copyright Office. She was appointed to this position effective April 23, 2019.

Strong advises the Register on the policy functions of the Copyright Office, including domestic and international copyright analyses, legislative support, and trade and treaty discussions. She directs the Office of Policy and International Affairs (PIA), which provides support and technical advice to Congress and represents the Copyright Office at meetings of government officials concerned with the international aspects of copyright protection and enforcement.

Strong also served as the Acting Register of Copyrights from January 5, 2020, through October 24, 2020, having been appointed by Librarian of Congress Carla Hayden. During that time, Strong led a 440-person workforce to administer the many aspects of the Copyright Act and continue office IT modernization efforts, all during pandemic operations. She also served as Acting Assistant Register and Director of Operations from November 7, 2021, to March 26, 2022. Prior to her April 2019 appointment as director of PIA, Strong served as its deputy director since January 2015. She also served as acting general counsel from April to July 2013. She joined the Copyright Office as senior counsel for policy and international affairs in 2010.

Before joining the Office, Strong spent nineteen years in private practice in Washington, DC, where she represented clients in the media, technology, and entertainment sectors and provided analyses and advocacy on global and domestic issues involving copyright law, enforcement, trade policy, and e-commerce. She began her legal career as a staff attorney at the Federal Communications Commission.

Strong earned a JD from George Washington University Law School, an MA in communications management from the University of Southern California's Annenberg School of Communications, and a BA in communication studies from UCLA.