

Laura Lee Prather to Receive James Madison Award

August 27, 2018 Laura Prather

PRACTICES Anti-SLAPP and First Amendment Rights, Media and Entertainment Litigation, Media Entertainment and Sports

Haynes Boone Partner [Laura Lee Prather](#) will receive the 2018 James Madison Award from the Freedom of Information (FOI) Foundation of Texas for serving as a champion of free speech and government transparency.

The award honors those who demonstrate outstanding commitment to upholding the principles of the First Amendment and open government. Prather will receive the award Sept. 21 at an awards luncheon during the foundation's Bernard and Audre Rapoport State Conference in Austin.

"I am humbled and honored to receive this prestigious award from an organization whose purpose is to help all Texans have access to information about what their government is doing," said Prather, a partner in Haynes Boone's Litigation Section and head of the Media Law Practice Group. "I am proud to fight for an open, honest and transparent government because that is what restores and keeps public confidence in the integrity of our government and its officials."

In a statement announcing the award, FOIFT cited Prather's work advocating for free speech and open government at the Texas legislature. "Laura is fearless and tireless in championing open government. No one in Texas has done more for the cause than her during the past decade," said Chris Cobler, editor and publisher of the Victoria Advocate and president of the FOI Foundation of Texas.

Prather was instrumental in the passage of the three most significant pieces of First Amendment legislation in recent history in Texas – the reporters' privilege, the Texas Citizens Participation Act, and the Defamation Mitigation Act. She formed and led the coalitions in support of all three of these measures, making Texas the 37th state to pass a reporters' privilege, the 28th state to adopt an Anti-SLAPP (strategic lawsuit against public participation) statute, and the 32nd state to enact a retraction statute. All three laws are designed to promote and protect free speech rights in Texas.

The head of Haynes Boone's Media Law Practice Group, Prather advises an extensive array of content providers including online and traditional newspapers, magazines, radio and television stations, production companies and music and sports entities. She is certified in civil appellate law by the Texas Board of Legal Specialization and has been recognized in *Chambers USA*, *Chambers & Partners*, for Nationwide - First Amendment Litigation, 2018.

Prather is a board member and past president of the FOI Foundation.

News of the award received media coverage from the following publications:

[Texas Lawyer](#)

[Texas Press Association](#)

[Texas Press Messenger](#)