

William A. Carleton

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About

William Carleton leads the firm's Emerging Companies group, which represents startup and emerging companies doing important and exciting work in social VR, VR graphics rendering, VR enabling technologies, VR entertainment, robotics, fintech, EMS, distributed manufacturing, and integrated web services.

This group shares the fierce independence of judgment that characterizes the firm as a whole. Bill believes that while many, if not most, situations in the tech ecosystem call for the application of industry standards and market norms, quality representation begins with knowing where and how to customize terms to leverage a client's inherent advantages.

Bill's two-decade-plus career traces a pattern of favoring entrepreneurs. At any given time, alongside his work representing tech companies in private financings, licensing transactions, and M&A events, he is likely to be personally representing an individual founder in transition.

At the same time, Bill is a leader in the venture and angel finance community, sources of private capital supporting the vision and work of entrepreneurs. He currently chairs the advisory council of the Angel Capital Association (ACA). Bill was one of the first people to sound the alarm over Wall Street reform legislation that threatened to set startups and angel investing back by years. With startup attorney Joe Wallin, he worked with leaders of the ACA to make sure legislators and regulators understood the concerns of angel investors and to inform them how startups raise seed financing. As a result of these efforts, a last-minute [Angel Investor Amendment](#) to Dodd-Frank was passed by voice vote on the Senate floor.

Practice Areas

Emerging Companies

Education

Cornell Law School (JD), magna cum laude

Cornell University (MFA), with distinction

Lafayette College

Bill speaks frequently at conferences, in recent years on the topics of general solicitation, accredited investor verification, and the different choices emerging companies now have to raise with financing privately. For example, he fielded questions with Angus Loten of *The Wall Street Journal* in real time on a live chat titled [What Will the JOBS Act Mean for U.S. Start-Ups?](#) Bill also moderated an ACA webinar on [Investor and Entrepreneur Experiences with Accredited Investing Platforms](#). His writing on how securities laws and the tech financing ecosystem are changing after the JOBS Act is widely published, including by [The Wall Street Journal](#), [TechCrunch](#), [GeekWire](#), and the [Angel Insights Blog](#).

Before returning to private practice 10 years ago, Bill served various emerging technology companies from the inside as a board member or officer. For three years, he was general counsel of Who's Calling, an early industry leader in call tracking and marketing analytics technology.