

Steven Lieberman at The Washington Foreign Law Society Event on Agudas Chasidei Chabad v. Russian Federation

Speaking Engagement
Washington, D.C.
9.18.19

Key Contact

Steven Lieberman

Partner Steven Lieberman participated in a Washington Foreign Law Society (WFLS) event entitled "Agudas Chasidei Chabad v. Russian Federation: Who Can Break the Deadlock?" on September 18, 2019, in Washington, D.C.

Steven participated as counsel to Chabad, a worldwide Jewish organization established 250 years ago in eastern Russia. During the upheavals of the 20th century, Chabad's library and archives were confiscated by the Soviets and the Nazis, and since the end of World War II, have been held by the Soviet and now Russian governments. Following a decades-long effort to secure the return of its religious and historical heritage, Chabad sued Russia in U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia. The DC Circuit ruled in Chabad's favor on the merits, and the District Court entered an order directing the return of the library and archives to Chabad in the United States. The Rothwell Figg team entered the case to obtain relief on the judgment, a matter complicated by the U.S. government's submissions to the court opposing Chabad's efforts. We have overcome those objections, however, and the Court has entered an order holding Russia in contempt. Currently, the accrued sanctions amount to close to \$150 million. This matter has come to the attention of the highest officials in the U.S. and Russian governments, has been followed by the press in both countries, and is one area in which politicians of all political stripe can agree: in 2017, all 100 United States Senators signed a letter to Russian President Putin calling for the return of Chabad's library and archives.

To learn more about the event, please visit the event page on The Washington Foreign Law Society website.