

MICHAEL J. GLEASON

PARTNER



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PRIMARY PRACTICES

Litigation

Complex Commercial Litigation

Class Action Litigation

Real Estate

Real Estate Industry Services

California's Proposition 65

Labor & Employment

Michael J. Gleason is an AV-rated trial and appellate lawyer with over 20 years of experience handling key areas of business litigation, including consumer class action defense, California's Proposition 65, product liability, fraud, real estate, escrow, and title insurance. He serves as Partner-in-Charge of Hahn Loeser's San Diego office, is founder of the firm's Proposition 65 defense group, and a member of the San Diego Litigation Team, which is ranked among the Top Tier Practices by Chambers USA.

Mike has litigated jury and bench trials to successful outcomes throughout California. He presented oral argument before the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, as well as the Second, Fourth, and Fifth Appellate Districts of the State of California and has also briefed matters before the California Supreme Court. He represents businesses in a wide range of industries, including escrow, title insurance, real estate, food, manufacturing, retail, oil and gas, entertainment, and consumer credit. Mike has also represented non-profit trade associations including the California Land Title Association and the American Land Title Association.

Mike volunteers on the Board of Directors of San Diego Volunteer Lawyer Program, which provides pro bono legal services to vulnerable San Diego County residents, including the homeless, abused children, domestic violence victims, elder abuse victims, veterans, immigrants and those living with HIV/AIDS. Mike also regularly volunteers at the Feeding America warehouse sorting food with his children and has actively participated in Feeding San Diego's annual "Food from the Bar" competition between law offices for the past seven years. Mike has volunteered as a coach for his son's basketball team for the past three seasons.

REPRESENTATIVE EXPERIENCE

- *Held v. LBH National Corporation*, California Superior Court, County of Orange, No. BC580791, in which Mike successfully represented a real estate brokerage by defeating a motion seeking certification of a class alleging claims based on breach of fiduciary duty and violations of California's Unfair Competition Law, Bus. & Prof. Code 17200.
- *Pifer v. Pifer*, California Court of Appeal, Fourth District, 2018 WL 5833257, in which after Mike obtained the dismissal of all claims asserted against corporate directors and officers, he successfully argued before the appellate court to affirm the judgment.
- *Dierenfield v. Commonwealth Land Title Company*, California Court of Appeal, Fourth District, 2018 WL 4178510, in which after Mike obtained the dismissal of a putative class action against his escrow company client, he successfully argued before the appellate court to affirm the judgment.
- *NNN Parkway Corporate Plaza B v. Hirschler Fleischer, APC*, Court of Appeal of California, Fourth Appellate District, 2017 Cal. App. Unpub. LEXIS 1927, in which Mike successfully argued before a California Appellate Court to affirm a dismissal obtained for his escrow client.



- *Hutton v. Fidelity National Title Company*, Superior Court of California, Kern County, 213 Cal. App. 4th 486, in which Mike successfully argued before a California Appellate Court to affirm a summary judgment obtained for his escrow client in a class action.
- *Bergman v. Fidelity National Financial*, United States District Court, Central District of California, 2012 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 171334, in which Mike obtained summary judgment in proposed RESPA national class action.
- *Henson v. Fidelity National Financial*, United States District Court, Central District of California, 300 F.R.D. 413, in which Mike successfully opposed class certification in proposed RESPA nationwide class which was subsequently dismissed.
- *Kingsberry v. Chicago Title Insurance Company*, United States District Court, Western District of Washington, 258 F.R.D. 668, in which Mike obtained a denial of class certification in a proposed state-wide class against a title insurer.
- *Villanueva v. Fidelity National Title Company*, Superior Court of California, Santa Clara County, No. 1-10-CV-173356, in which after successfully eliminating claims and certain class allegations via motion practice, Mike was part of a trial team that defeated plaintiff's claims seeking over \$35 million, which was subsequently reviewed by the California Supreme Court given the importance of the case.
- *Shiloh Mission Baptist Church, Inc. v. Fantroy*, California Superior Court, Los Angeles County, No. 20STCV01460, in which Mike served as lead counsel in a nine-day jury trial and obtained a complete defense verdict on quiet title and tort claims asserted against a nonprofit corporation and its chief executive officer.
- *Beasley v. Subco Foods, Inc.*, California Superior Court, San Mateo County, No. 19CIV03681, in which Mike served as lead counsel in obtaining a dismissal for his client based on food labelling allegations.
- *Han Realty Corp. Bank of America*, Court of Appeal of California, Second Appellate District, 2019 WL 1594020, in which Mike successfully argued before the appellate court to confirm the dismissal of real estate claims he secured on behalf of a title insurer.
- *Overland Direct, Inc. v. Tepper*, California Superior Court, Los Angeles County, No. LC105742, in which Mike obtained a dismissal of all quiet title and tort claims alleged against his lender client.
- *Overland Direct, Inc. v. LOA Investments, LLC*, California Superior Court, Los Angeles County, No. B630343, in which Mike obtained a dismissal of all quiet title and tort claims alleged against his property/business owner client.
- *Canyon Vineyard Estates I, LLC v. John Paul DeJoria, et al.*, California Supreme Court, No. S274548, in which Mike represented the California Land Title Association and American Land Title Association as amicus before the California Supreme Court.
- For a food industry client, providing ongoing compliance advice and litigation support. Currently defending client in a California

lawsuit which alleges the “No Added MSG” label on certain client products is misleading under California and federal law. Also defending client in a separate California lawsuit based on allegations that certain client products require additional labelling based on the content of its ingredients.

- Representing one of the largest title insurance companies in the U.S. in a putative class action pending in Orange County, California. Plaintiffs seek to represent high net worth individuals who invested in multiple commercial properties. These commercial properties are generally large buildings (such as skyscrapers) which are then leased out to tenant businesses with rent going to these individual investors. The properties went into foreclosure during the pandemic when tenants began abandoning the buildings. After the foreclosure, plaintiffs now allege that they never would have entered these commercial real estate investments had the title insurance company disclosed certain information about the investment structures and the parties involved in the investment. Plaintiffs allege multiple counts, including fraud, breach of fiduciary duty, breach of contract, and violation of California’s Unfair Competition Law. Hahn Loeser successfully moved to dismiss all claims. On appeal, however, California’s Fourth Appellate District partially reversed the dismissal and remanded certain claims. Hahn Loeser then successfully opposed class certification. The trial court has now allowed plaintiffs to file a Fifth Amended Complaint with four new plaintiffs—narrowing the claims from twenty commercial properties to six properties—and allowed plaintiffs the opportunity to renew their motion for class certification.
- Ongoing defense of a title insurance company in an action filed in California state court. A commercial developer of several larger condominium and apartment developments in San Jose was sued by the Securities and Exchange Commission for operating a Ponzi scheme involving tens of millions of dollars in which the developer allegedly paid investors of certain development projects with funds from investors from other development projects. The SEC filed a federal action and appointed a receiver to take control of the developer’s projects and business. Client served as the escrow officer for many of the developments. A lender to the developer of approximately \$20M has separately sued client for allegedly aiding and abetting the Ponzi scheme – a dispute also being handled for title insurance client.

BAR ADMISSIONS

- State of California, 2011
- U.S. Supreme Court, 2025
- State of Ohio, 2001 (inactive)
- U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit; U.S. District Courts for the Northern District of Ohio, Southern District of Ohio, Central District of California, Southern District of California, Northern District of California, Eastern District of California

EDUCATION

- Cornell Law School, J.D., 2001
- Cornell Journal of Law and Public Policy, General Editor; Phi Delta Phi, Member
- University of Buffalo, B.A., History, magna cum laude, 1998
- Phi Beta Kappa, Member; Highest Honors in History Department; Dean's List; Phi Alpha Theta History Honors Society, Member; Golden Key Honors Society, Member; Outstanding Student in Political Science

AWARDS & HONORS

- ChambersUSA, Commercial Litigation, 2023-25
- The Best Lawyers in America®, Litigation – Real Estate, 2024-26, Commercial Litigation, 2025-26
- AV Preeminent®, Martindale-Hubbell
- SD 500 – The Most Influential People in San Diego, San Diego Business Journal, 2022, 2024, 2025
- San Diego's Top Attorneys, SD Metro Magazine, 2022, 2024
- Top 100 Leaders in Law, San Diego Business Journal, 2022
- Top 50 Influential Leaders, The Daily Transcript, 2019
- "Top Lawyer," Civil Litigation, San Diego Magazine, 2017-present
- Rising Star, Southern California Super Lawyers®, 2015-16
- "2015 Multi-State Class Action Defense Attorney of the Year in California," Global Law Experts and CorporateINTL, 2015
- Rising Star, Ohio Super Lawyers®, 2010-11

PUBLICATIONS & SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

- California's Proposition 65: 60-Day Notices Target California Restaurants

MEMBERSHIPS & AFFILIATIONS

- Board Member, San Diego Volunteer Lawyers Program, 2019-present
- State Bar of California, Member
- San Diego County Bar Association
- Association of Business Trial Lawyers
- ProVisors
- California Land Title Association

PROFESSIONAL HISTORY

- Partner-In-Charge, San Diego Office, Hahn Loeser & Parks LLP, 2012-present; Partner, 2010-present; Associate, 2007-09
- Attorney, Jones Day, 2001-07
- Research Assistant to Professor Faust F. Rossi, Cornell Law School, Summer 1999