

C.D. "CHUCK"

MICHEL

MICHEL & ASSOCIATES

FIREARMS LAW AND
REGULATORY COMPLIANCE,
SECOND AMENDMENT &
CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS
ADVOCACY, EMPLOYMENT LAW,
GOVERNMENT AND MUNICIPAL
LAW, CORPORATE AND NON-
PROFIT GOVERNANCE
LONG BEACH

C.D. "Chuck" Michel's firm has spent seven years on *Duncan v. Bonta*, the challenge to California's ban on possession of standard-capacity firearm magazines. His side won at the trial court twice and before a three-judge panel, then lost twice before an en banc panel. The case now sits at the U.S. Supreme Court for a second time, on hold while the court prepares rulings in *Viramontes* and *Grant*, cases testing Illinois and Connecticut bans on what the statutes term "assault weapons." "Perhaps the most well-known is the *Duncan v. Bonta* case challenging

California's ban on the possession of standard-capacity firearm magazines," Michel said. "We have been fighting this case for seven years."

Michel traces the obstacle to a panel of Ninth Circuit judges. "The main obstacle is a philosophically hostile Ninth Circuit en banc panel," he said, pointing to Judge Lawrence VanDyke's *Duncan* dissent, which he said accuses colleagues of declining to follow Supreme Court precedent on the Second Amendment.

Michel grew up in New Jersey, hunting and target shooting, and earned his undergraduate degree at Rutgers. He moved to California in 1980 and watched politicians campaign against gun ownership. That, he said, is what pulled him into Second Amendment advocacy. He was admitted to the bar in 1989, after a stint as a district court law clerk and three years at O'Melveny & Myers LLP, before opening his own practice.

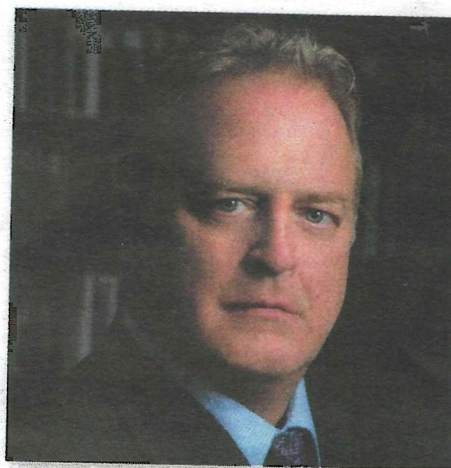
The firm has other Second Amendment matters underway beyond *Duncan*, including challenges to how Los Angeles and Santa Clara County issue

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licenses to carry concealed firearms. Michel's team is also coordinating an amicus brief campaign around the *Viramontes* case and advising firearm business clients on regulatory compliance.

Michel points to *Heller* (2008) and *Bruen* (2022) as the decisions that reset Second Amendment law in favor of gun rights, and he expects the court's ruling in *Viramontes* and *Grant*, now consolidated, to extend that trend next year. "The decisions that we expect from SCOTUS next year will further protect those rights by striking down bans on commonly possessed semi-automatic firearms, clarifying where guns can be banned, and what the state must prove in order to deprive someone of their Second Amendment rights," he said.

Michel spent years with the California Inns of Court program, though he has pulled back given his caseload. His firm continues to take on pro bono matters and works to develop its associates professionally, a task he says has grown harder since colleagues stopped sharing an office. "Remote work has made that



much more difficult than it was when colleagues gathered in a common office space," he said.

Asked what else is reshaping the practice, Michel pointed past the courtroom. "The adoption of AI is changing things for everyone," he said. On how the firm approaches any matter, Second Amendment or otherwise, Michel said: "We strive to give our clients good value while being realistic and practical."