

Ex-III. Solicitor General Joins Mayer Brown Appellate Group

By **Hannah Meisel**

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Illinois' former Solicitor General Michael Scodro has rejoined Mayer Brown's Chicago practice as a partner in the firm's Supreme Court and Appellate practice, Mayer Brown announced Monday.

Scodro, who served as the state's Solicitor General from 2007 to 2014, was most recently a partner at Chicago-based Jenner & Block LLP. In his final weeks at Jenner, Scodro scored one final victory in front of the Illinois Supreme Court last month when the justices sided with his client, Hertz Corp., in its taxation case against the city of Chicago. The high court struck down a 2011 city ordinance that taxed rental cars picked up within three miles of city limits.



Michael Scodro

"That was a significant case and an extremely interesting case from legal perspective," Scodro told Law360 Monday. "State taxation and municipal taxation is really an incredibly dynamic area right now and a very interesting area of law of huge importance to many many clients."

Scodro said he hopes to continue handling tax cases within Mayer Brown's appellate division. After all, Scodro said, he's now seen taxation cases from both sides of government.

"I saw them from the other side, from the state and municipal taxation side," Scodro said of his time in the Illinois Attorney General's Office. "A meaningful part of our civil docket was tax work. So now I'm seeing it from the taxpayer side and it's phenomenally interesting."

In his seven years within the Illinois Attorney General's Office, Scodro worked alongside Attorney General Lisa Madigan focusing on appellate cases both in civil and criminal law. Scodro served as Solicitor General for six of those years, a job he described as a "dream come true."

Scodro said his most memorable case in government service was the first he argued in front of the U.S. Supreme Court in February 2009, *Rivera v. Illinois*. The case centered around how to rectify mistakes made during jury selection, a "thorny" legal question, Scodro said. Ultimately, Scodro prevailed on behalf of the state garnering a unanimous decision by the justices.

Although the Supreme Court is not foreign territory to Scodro — he clerked for Justice Sandra Day O'Connor fresh out of Yale Law School — he said all the preparation does not completely take away nervousness the morning of.

"You don't eat a big meal that day," Scodro joked. "Enough to keep you from passing out."

But he said the process of arguing in front of the nation's high court is a gratifying one.

"It's everything you hope for and train for," Scodro said. "It's exactly what you want to be doing."

In its announcement Monday morning, leaders at Mayer Brown praised Scodro's legal background as they welcomed him back to the firm he spent years of his early career in.

"Mike is a seasoned appellate court practitioner with extraordinary oral advocacy and writing skills, and we are thrilled to welcome him back to the firm," Mayer Brown's global litigation co-leader Andrew Marovitz said in a statement. "His vast experience representing clients in jurisdictions around the country and before the US Supreme Court, together with his time as Illinois' chief appellate lawyer, complements our bench of esteemed appeals lawyers in Chicago and nationwide."

Rebecca Eisner, partner-in-charge of Mayer Brown's Chicago office, said Scodro's deep ties to Chicago and Illinois' legal community are important to the firm.

"Mike is deeply embedded as a leading member of our local legal community, and his arrival solidifies our reputation as a premier US Supreme Court and appellate practice," Eisner said in a statement. "Mike's addition also continues the strategic expansion of our Chicago office."

Aside from private practice, Scodro also teaches a lecture course at the University of Chicago's law school, which he said was an "extremely refreshing" part of every week when he gets to engage with "extraordinarily bright students coming to law fresh," he said.

When he's not thinking about the law, Scodro said he's cheering on the Chicago Cubs with his wife and three school-aged children. In early November when the team clinched the World Series, Scodro said the family was all together.

"Everyone got to stay up late that night," he said.

--Editing by Joe Phalon.