PRESS RELEASES

Benesch Welcomes Michael Vatis as Partner in New York, Expands Privacy & Cybersecurity Practice

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Benesch has added Michael Vatis as a partner in its New York office. A privacy and cybersecurity counselor and a litigator with deep appellate experience, Vatis joins from Steptoe, where he chaired the Privacy & Cybersecurity practice.

“Mike is a great addition to our New York office and a strong collaborator with our powerhouse Retail & E-Commerce-focused group out of San Francisco,” said Benesch Firmwide Managing Partner Gregg A. Eisenberg. “He is also a top-notch appellate specialist, having argued several cases of first impression for clients in this space in the Second Circuit, Ninth Circuit, and before the Oregon Supreme Court most recently.”

Vatis has nearly 20 years of experience assisting clients in navigating U.S. and international privacy and data security laws and regulations, helping clients prevent or respond to data breaches, and representing clients in high-stakes litigation and in enforcement actions by the Federal Trade Commission and state attorneys general. Prior to that, Vatis served in key operational and policy roles in the federal government in the areas of cybercrime, cybersecurity, counterterrorism, counterintelligence, and critical infrastructure protection. Vatis was the founding head of the FBI's computer crime and infrastructure protection program; Associate Deputy Attorney General for national security matters in the Department of Justice; and Special Counsel in the Office of General Counsel at the Department of Defense, where he received the Secretary of Defense Award for Excellence. Following government service, he served as the first Director of the Institute for Security Technology Studies at Dartmouth, the founding Chairman of the Institute for Information Infrastructure Protection (I3P), and Executive Director of the Markle Task Force on National Security in the Information Age.

“Mike and I have worked closely together over the past five years on behalf of my national retail and e-commerce clients, and he is well-respected across the industry as a thought-leader in privacy developments in this important, ever-evolving field, particularly as we encounter newer issues like VPPA (Video Privacy Protection Act) litigation and the constant flow of new legislation on both the state and federal levels,” said Stephanie Sheridan, Partner in Charge of Benesch’s San Francisco office and Chair of the Retail & E-Commerce Group. “I’m thrilled for Mike to be reunited with our team, as we continue to build Benesch’s powerhouse national practice group from coast to coast.”

Representing clients in appeals and dispositive trial court motions, Vatis’s experience also extends to constitutional challenges to government actions, commercial disputes, and insurance coverage litigation.

A clerk for Justice Thurgood Marshall at the U.S. Supreme Court and for Hon. Ruth Bader Ginsburg at the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit, Vatis earned his J.D. from Harvard Law School,

magna cum laude, and his A.B. from Princeton University*, magna cum laude.*