National Law Journal Names Pantelis Michalopoulos a Trailblazer in Washington

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Overview
(September 14, 2020, Washington, DC) — Steptoe partner Pantelis Michalopoulos, who serves as the co-head of the firm's Regulated Industries Department and leader of the Technology and Telecom practice, has been named to The National Law Journal's inaugural list of Washington DC Trailblazers. The list is featured in a supplement in the September issue of the legal publication.

Michalopoulos has been an agent of change, blazing trails for new entrants in the Internet, telecom and media space against incumbents in established telecommunications industries. He has won landmark cases (T-Mobile/Sprint merger, net neutrality, broadcast flag, plug and play) that have helped shape today's and tomorrow's Internet delivery. He has defended social media platforms against attempts by the current US administration to curtail their freedoms.

Leveraging his deep knowledge of competition law and innovative thinking, Michalopoulos argued and won the broadcast flag case and the plug and play case. He is also the only lawyer to have argued in all three net neutrality cases on behalf of the online industry (partial victory on the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) jurisdiction in the first, unqualified win in the second, partial win in the third). Without these decisions, online video delivery would likely have been stifled, cord-cutting and watching TV on our cell phones would not be possible, and the video delivery and digital recording landscape would look entirely different today.

Most recently, Michalopoulos has played a lead role in the T-Mobile/Sprint merger proceedings, whose disposition has transformed the US wireless industry. He has helped DISH propose a creative remedy to that merger, which was approved by two federal agencies, prevailed in two federal court proceedings, and made DISH into the fourth US wireless carrier. He has also assisted clients in opposing two proposed mega-mergers (Comcast/Time Warner Cable, Sinclair/Tribune), which would have dramatically altered the media landscape. Both mergers were nixed by regulators. In the recent FCC proceeding concerning the freeing up of electromagnetic frequencies for 5G, Michalopoulos helped his client argue for, and achieve, a creative solution that could both usher in 5G and protect the interests of the band’s current users. On behalf of Vimeo, Michalopoulos has also opposed the current administration’s attempt to strip social media platforms of their flexibility in moderating content— the primary opposition to the proposed measure by private online companies.

Michalopoulos represents Internet companies and coalitions, such as Mozilla, Etsy, INCOMPAS, and the Coalition for Internet Openness, against Internet service providers; satellite companies, like DISH Network, against broadcast and cable operators; and programmers, like beIN, the soccer network that broadcasts Barcelona's and Real's games in the United States, against cable TV operators.

About Steptoe
In more than 100 years of practice, Steptoe has earned an international reputation for vigorous representation of clients before governmental agencies, successful advocacy in litigation and arbitration, and creative and practical advice in structuring business transactions. Steptoe has more than 500 lawyers and other professional staff across offices in Beijing, Brussels, Chicago, Hong Kong, London, Los Angeles, New York, San Francisco, and Washington. For more information, visit www.steptoe.com.