



C. Michael Evert, Jr.

Founding Partner

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Since the 1980's, Michael has played a pivotal role in mass tort litigation throughout the United States. The depth of his experience as a lead trial counsel, a complex settlement negotiator, and an overall strategist places Michael in a very small group of mass toxic tort lawyers with a complete understanding of the judicial, financial, and tactical issues relevant to mass tort claims.

After its formation in 1989, Evert Weathersby Houff became a primary contributor to the strategic community for the defense of the asbestos litigation. Michael was in a small group of counsel that developed and implemented unique defense strategies for that litigation, and the resulting regional trial team organization became a model for many defendants in the asbestos litigation and other mass toxic torts.

Michael's trial experience is extensive, both geographically and numerically, as he has acted as lead trial counsel in individual asbestos trials in more than a dozen states. He served as a lead defense trial counsel in major asbestos case consolidations, including the Baltimore shipyard consolidations of the early to mid-1990's and the first major consolidation in the Mississippi Delta. It was during this time that he served as National Trial Counsel for a number of large-scale construction, engineering, and manufacturing companies.

Likewise, where complex settlement models were the appropriate course, Michael directed and conducted negotiations in a variety of mass tort claims (including asbestos) with virtually every significant plaintiff's lawyer and firm involved in mass toxic tort litigation today. His experience in this area allows him to consider a wide range of alternatives in order to meet the goals of the client.

As a result of the expertise and successes above, in the early 2000's Michael began to concentrate his practice on the coordination and strategic aspects of mass tort litigation and began to serve primarily as a National Coordinating Counsel for a number of companies. Those clients include multi-billion dollar revenue consumer product manufacturing companies, long-term industrial manufacturing companies, constructors, and engineering firms. In that role, Michael advises on financial, strategic, and litigation plans designed to respond effectively to the sophisticated and orchestrated tactics of the plaintiffs' bar. His longevity and variety of experiences in mass tort litigation, along with the breadth of his client base, gives Michael a rare perspective on national strategies and trends.

Michael is listed in *The Best Lawyers in America* and *Super Lawyers* in the specialty of Mass Tort Litigation, and Evert Weathersby Houff has been recognized as one of American Lawyer's "Go-To Litigation Firms" for Fortune 500 Companies. He frequently is asked to speak on the asbestos litigation and continues to be an invited lecturer at highly regarded gatherings of the leaders of the toxic tort bar.

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STAND-OUT LAWYER 2024

Education

- Juris Doctor, The University of Georgia, 1983, *cum laude*
- Bachelor of Business Administration, The University of Georgia, 1980, *magna cum laude*

Admissions

- State Bar of Florida
- State Bar of Georgia
- State Bar of Mississippi
- United States District Court for the Northern District of Georgia
- United States District Court for the Middle District of Georgia
- United States District Court for the Southern District of Georgia
- Supreme Court of Georgia
- Chancery Courts of Mississippi
- United States District Court for the Northern District of Mississippi
- United States District Court for the Southern District of Mississippi
- Supreme Court of Mississippi
- Supreme Court of Florida
- United States Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit
- United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit
- United States Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit
- Supreme Court of the United States

Speaking Engagements

- "Fiber Type and Mesothelioma: Review and Update of the Medical and Scientific Literature", Defense Research Institute, New Orleans, LA, October 18, 1990
- "Trial Techniques in Mass Tort Cases", Georgia Insurance Institute, St. Simons Island, GA, September 17, 1992
- "How Much is Enough? Mass Trials in Maryland, Mississippi, Texas and West Virginia", Andrews Continuing Education Institute, Houston, TX, March 10, 1995

- “Workplace Simulations: Better than Being There?”, Defense Research Institute, Las Vegas, NV, November 11, 1999
- “Cigarette Liability, The Tobacco Defense in Asbestos Litigation”, Panelist, Miami, FL, January 22, 2001
- “Asbestos Litigation as Model for Mass Torts: Past, Present, and Future”, Texas Lawyer, Dallas, TX, April 9, 2003
- “Trial Issues in 2003”, Mealey's National Litigation Conference, Chicago, IL, September 8, 2003
- “The Fight to Regain Justice – The Impact of State Tort Reforms”, Insurance Industry Forum, New York, NY, September 29, 2005
- “When We Are All Together: What are the Rules? Ethical and Practical Considerations of Judges, Plaintiffs and Defendants Outside the Courtroom”, Perrin Asbestos Litigation Conference: A National Overview and Outlook, San Francisco, CA, September 20, 2011
- “Asbestos Litigation Now and in the Future – A Panel of Inside and Outside Coordinating Counsel”, Panelist, Defense Research Institute, Asbestos Medicine Seminar, Las Vegas, NV, November 10, 2011
- “Impact by Other Mass Tort Law in Asbestos Litigation”, Panelist, Perrin Asbestos Litigation Conference: A National Overview and Outlook, San Francisco, CA, September 8, 2014
- “Impact of Bankruptcies on Litigation Strategies”, Panelist, Perrin Asbestos Litigation Conference: A National Overview and Outlook, San Francisco, CA, September 28, 2015
- “National Counsel Roundtable: Expectations of Counsel”, Panelist, The Defense Asbestos Litigation Seminar, Las Vegas, NV, June 9, 2016

Professional Recognition

- *Martindale-Hubbell® Preeminent AV™ Peer Review Rated*
- *The Best Lawyers in America®* since 2007: Mass Tort Litigation / Class Actions - Defendants
- *Super Lawyers* since 2012 – Class Action/Mass Torts

Related Practices

- Appellate
- Asbestos
- Products Liability
- Toxic Tort