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Gibson Dunn Wins Dismissal of Defamation Lawsuit Against Client Mississippi Today

Firm News | April 7, 2025

Gibson Dunn has secured the dismissal of a defamation lawsuit against our client, Mississippi Today, an online media outlet. The lawsuit, brought by former Mississippi Governor Phil Bryant, alleged that Mississippi Today defamed Bryant through comments made by its personnel regarding the outlet's award-winning reporting about Bryant's alleged role in a welfare scandal. The Court agreed with the motion to dismiss, stating that Bryant had failed to plead any legally viable claims.

"Mississippi Today's Pulitzer Prize-winning reporting on the former Governor's role in the State's recent welfare scandal is exactly the type of reporting the First Amendment was intended to protect, and it exemplifies why the Mississippi Constitution calls the right to a free press 'sacred.' The Court's decision honors those constitutional rights and ends Governor Bryant's unconstitutional crusade against Mississippi's free press," said New York partner Lee Crain.

The Gibson Dunn team included partners Theodore J. Boutrous Jr. (Los Angeles), Lee R. Crain (New York), and Katie Townsend (Los Angeles) and New York associates Chase Weidner, Iason Togias, and Peter Jacobs.

Judge Mills' order dismissing the case: https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/25879902-mills-judgment-4-4-25/#document/p1

Mississippi Today's brief in support of motion to dismiss: https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/25879903-mississippi-today-brief-in-support-of-motion-to-dismiss/

Read more about the case:

Mississippi Today: https://mississippitoday.org/2025/04/04/a-win-for-press-freedom-judge-dismisses-gov-phil-bryants-lawsuit-against-mississippi-today/

The Washington Post: https://www.washingtonpost.com/style/media/2025/04/05/phil-byrant-mississippi-today-lawsuit-dismissed/

The Clarion-Ledger: https://www.clarionledger.com/story/news/2025/04/04/phil-bryant-to-appeal-defamation-lawsuit-dismissal-involving-mississippi-today/82888715007/

Related Capabilities

Related People

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