

# TRAILBLAZERS

## SPORTS & ENTERTAINMENT

### MATTHEW D. MCGILL GIBSON, DUNN & CRUTCHER LLP



**PIONEER SPIRIT** Matt McGill co-led New Jersey's successful challenge to the federal law that prohibited states from legalizing sports betting. "We were fortunate to be retained by then-Gov. Chris Christie to litigate New Jersey's efforts and pursued that case for six years before winning in the U.S.

Supreme Court. It was a story of determination and perseverance on behalf of our client. That experience gave the team and me a great deal of insight into not only sports betting but the larger betting and gaming industry, that has now spun out into other matters."

**TRAILS BLAZED** McGill and his team convinced the Supreme Court to overturn the Professional and Amateur Sports Protection Act of 1992. "After Hurricane Sandy devastated the Atlantic City area, Gov. Christie wanted to revitalize it by making New Jersey a gaming hub on the East Coast. We lost five times in the lower courts but finally convinced the Supreme Court to strike the act down. It was only the third time the Supreme Court has struck down a statute on the grounds of anti-commandeering. Now, of course, sports betting is flourishing in approximately 13 states." McGill also represented NeoPollard Interactive's successful challenge to a Department of Justice January 2019 attempt to redefine the scope of the Wire Act to prohibit all forms of betting over interstate wires. "New Hampshire is one of several states that sells lottery tickets over the internet. In June, we won a sweeping victory as the District Court in New Hampshire ruled the Justice Department's reinterpretation was contrary to the statute and invalidated it. It's under appeal to the First Circuit right now."

**FUTURE EXPLORATIONS** States are eager to legalize internet gambling. "But there will be a number of regulatory challenges, as each state stakes out its own regime."