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Services

Litigation and Dispute Resolution

- Class and Collective Actions
- Commercial and Corporate Litigation
- Election and Political Law
- Governmental Litigation
- Professional Liability and Malpractice Litigation
- Real Estate and Construction Litigation

Public Finance

Industries

- Construction
- Government and Public Sector
- Health Care
- Higher Education

Education

Harvard Law School, J.D., 1994
University of Michigan, B.B.A.

Bar Admissions

District of Columbia
Michigan

Court Admissions

U.S. Court of Appeals



Sonal Hope Mithani

Principal
Ann Arbor Resident Director
General Counsel

Recognized by *Michigan Lawyers Weekly* as one of 2017's "Women in the Law," named by *Crain's Detroit Business* as one of its "Notable Women in the Law" for 2019, and recognized as one of the Top 50 Women Michigan Super Lawyers in 2025, Soni Mithani has more than 30 years of experience litigating complex commercial and governmental litigation matters. Her practice carries an emphasis on non-compete and trade secret litigation, consumer class action litigation, construction litigation, real estate litigation, and municipal litigation, including several class action matters challenging the constitutionality of municipal fees. She also serves as the firm's General Counsel and has provided advice and counsel to other law firms seeking guidance on issues relating to professional responsibility and legal ethics.

Municipal and Headlee Amendment Litigation and Counseling

Soni has handled cases on behalf of a variety of municipal entities including bond-related disputes, actions to enforce consent judgments against municipalities, ballot challenges, and claims involving the Open Meetings Act. She is also well-versed in defending challenges to imposed utility fees based on the theory that the fees are impermissibly-assessed taxes under the Michigan Constitution, having handled in the last five years more than a dozen cases brought against municipalities under the Headlee Amendment. She has also handled several claims challenging the reasonableness and appropriateness of municipal rates and fees under state and federal law and has counseled communities regarding the legality of their ordinances and rate setting methodologies.

Sonal Hope Mithani

- Sixth Circuit

U.S. District Courts

- District of Columbia
- Eastern District of Michigan
- Western District of Michigan

Professional Responsibility and Legal Ethics Counseling

Soni has advised smaller-to-mid-sized law firms on issues concerning professional misconduct, focusing on ethical quandaries, client responsibilities, and risk mitigation. She has also provided these firms with guidance on potential loss prevention concerns in various areas including but not limited to internal practice decisions and vendor and client management.

General Business and Complex Commercial Litigation

Soni maintains a broad general commercial litigation practice that encompasses cases ranging in value from seven-to-nine figures. Her cases include disputes over the enforcement of non-compete and confidentiality provisions, insurance coverage work, securities litigation and scores of business-to-business breach of contract and breach of warranty matters. Her commercial litigation practice covers matters not only in trial courts but appellate courts, as well, where she has frequently obtained favorable decisions either reversing or upholding trial court rulings. She also provides general legal advice to several clients including large corporations, governmental entities, mid-size businesses, private schools and non-profit organizations.

Real Estate and Construction Litigation

Soni represents entities in disputes involving real estate, including lien enforcement actions, lease disputes, eminent domain actions and actions to quiet title. She also represents owners and contractors involved in construction disputes. Her construction practice involves trial and appellate litigation and larger-scale arbitrations involving claims for liquidated damages, negligent design, recovery under the Spearin doctrine, delay, inefficiency, acceleration, schedule compression, changed conditions and contract abandonment.

Representative Matters

- Defended the City of Detroit against purported class action claims seeking more than \$150 million in drainage charge refunds by obtaining a ruling that the City's drainage charge is a valid user fee and not an unlawful tax under the Headlee Amendment.
- Defended a municipality in a class action lawsuit requesting water and sewer fee refunds in excess of \$30 million, obtaining summary judgment in favor of the municipality.

Sonal Hope Mithani

- Defending a Michigan municipality and its public works board against claims that the client overcharged its electric utility customers—a matter that will test the ability of resident-owned municipal utilities to obtain any return on investment (at rates below those of privately owned, profit driven utilities)
- Successfully defended a municipality against \$70 million in claims challenging sewer rates under the Headlee Amendment by obtaining summary judgment dismissing the claim and reaching a successful settlement of the lawsuit prior to rehearing/appeal for approximately \$2 million.
- Served as lead counsel in successfully defending the City of St. Clair Shores in a landmark class action, securing a published decision that upheld municipalities’ ability to use Act 345 funds for retiree healthcare benefits alongside pensions.
- Defended the Charter Township of Clinton, Michigan in a class action lawsuit alleging that the Township had misused millage funds collected for police operations by allegedly spending millage proceeds on police retiree health care benefits
- Successfully defended a municipality against claims asserting more than \$20 million in refunds based on the alleged unlawful assessment of taxes without voter approval under the Headlee Amendment, prevailing both at the lower court and on appeal before the Michigan Supreme Court.
- Successfully defended a publicly traded savings bank in federal class action litigation challenging the bank’s overdraft and payment ordering processes and alleging millions of dollars in damages. Obtained dismissal and/or summary judgment of all tort, contract and statutory claims filed against the bank and upheld summary judgment ruling on appeal.
- Successfully tried and defended the City of Detroit against a potential class action lawsuit that drew international attention regarding the City’s program of shutting off water to non-paying customers.
- Successfully defended the non-competition provision of a multi-million dollar physician group’s shareholder agreements, obtaining a favorable settlement for the client prior to a trial on damages.
- Served as lead trial counsel defending a billion-dollar construction management company against a \$20 million construction claim brought in a multi-party arbitration.
- Successfully defended a client sued by a “whistleblower” under the False Claims Act for damages and penalties totaling more than \$10 million. Based on an early and vigorous defense of the claims, Soni was able to convince the federal government to decline intervention. Ultimately, the case was immediately dismissed after it was unsealed.
- Represented a major North American supplier of food and industrial starches against breach of warranty claims and successfully obtained summary judgment on all counts – a decision that was affirmed on appeal in the United States Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit.
- Defended a Michigan-based company against a putative class action lawsuit brought by consumers under the Fair Credit Reporting Act. Prior to class certification, she was able to resolve the dispute on favorable terms that were significantly less than the anticipated exposure from a trial on the merits.

Sonal Hope Mithani

Honors

Chambers USA, Litigation: General Commercial, 2025

State Bar of Michigan Pro Bono Honor Roll, 2020–2025

Crain's Detroit Business, Notable Women in the Law, 2019

Best Lawyers in America, Ann Arbor Real Estate Litigation Lawyer of the Year, 2019, 2021 & 2023; Ann Arbor Construction Litigation Lawyer of the Year, 2019 & 2024; Recognized for Commercial Litigation (2009–present) and Real Estate Litigation and Construction Litigation (2012–present)

Michigan Super Lawyers, Civil Litigation Defense, 2011–present; Business Litigation, 2024–present; Top 50 Women Michigan Super Lawyers, 2012, 2023, & 2025; Rising Star, 2008

DBusiness Magazine, Top Lawyers, 2020-present:

Commercial Litigation

Construction Litigation

Leading Lawyers, Commercial Litigation, 2014–present

Michigan Lawyers Weekly, Women in the Law, Class of 2017

American Bar Foundation, Fellow

Michigan State Bar Foundation, Fellow

Litigation Counsel of America, Fellow

Harvard Law School, J.D., cum laude

University of Michigan, B.B.A., with high distinction, Phi Beta Kappa

Professional Activities

American Bar Association, 1995-present; Forum on the Construction Industry, 2011

State Bar of Michigan, 1994-present; District G Character and Fitness Committee, 2004-2009; Standing Committee on Character & Fitness, Advisor Member, 2011-2020, Regular Member, 2020-2022, Presiding Member, 2022-present; Government Law Section Council, Member, 2017-present, Secretary-Treasurer, 2020-2021, Vice Chair, 2021-2022, Chair, 2022-2023

District of Columbia Bar Association, 1996-present

Washtenaw County Bar Association, 1999-present, Board of Directors, 2004-2006; Judiciary Committee, 2001-2004; Co-Chair, 2003-2004

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Civic, Cultural & Social Activities

Ozone House, Board of Directors, 2013-2022; President of the Board of Directors, 2017–2019, 2020–2021

Ann Arbor Summer Festival, Board of Trustees, 2014–2016

Ann Arbor City Housing and Human Services, Advisory Board, 2008–2013

Washtenaw Community College Foundation, Board of Directors, 2007–2013

Ann Arbor Hands-On Museum, Ann Arbor, MI, Board of Trustees, October 2002–September 2008

Neighborhood Senior Services, Ann Arbor, MI, Board of Directors, February 2001–April 2006; Secretary, January 2003–December 2004; Chair, January 2004–April 2006; Marketing Committee, 2006

Leadership Ann Arbor, 2001 Graduate

Speeches

"Refresher Course on Ethics for In-House Counsel," Sponsored by Miller Canfield, Findlay, Ohio (November 29, 2017)

"Do You Have a *Bolt* Problem?," Michigan Association of Municipal Attorneys/Public Corporation Law Section of the Michigan State Bar Summer Education Conference (June 24, 2016)

"Do You have a *Bolt* Problem?," Michigan Municipal League Annual Convention (September 15, 2016)

"Sexual Misconduct on Campus," "Internal Investigations," Michigan Independent Colleges and Universities (MICU) Higher Education Sessions, Ann Arbor and Grand Rapids, Michigan, March 10th and 18th, 2015

"False Claims Act Liability: The Basics," Association of General Contractors 95th Annual Convention (March 4, 2014)

"Under Construction: A Nuts and Bolts Update for Construction Industry Leaders," Sponsored by Miller Canfield, Troy and Grand Rapids, Michigan, October 16th and 23rd, 2013

"Preserving + Enforcing Your Non-Competes," Miller Canfield Cappuccino with Counsel Series, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan, October 16, 2012

"Preserving + Enforcing Your Non-Competes," Sponsored by Miller Canfield, Chicago, Illinois, September 27, 2012

"Legal Issues Surrounding Stormwater Utilities in Michigan," Gray Skies No More: New Opportunities for Funding Your Aging Sanitary & Stormwater Systems, OHM Advisors Lunch & Learn, September 25, 2012

"Preserving + Enforcing Non Competition Provisions in Michigan," Sponsored by Miller Canfield, Troy, Michigan, March 7, 2012

"Morning Update: Preserving and Enforcing Your Non-Competes," Sponsored by Miller Canfield, Ann Arbor, Michigan, November 2, 2011

Sonal Hope Mithani

"Health Law Update for Physicians," Sponsored by Miller Canfield, Saginaw, Michigan, March 26, 2011

Publications

"Litigation Issues for the Prime Contractor," Green Building and the Construction Lawyers: A Practical Guide to Transactional and Litigation Issues, American Bar Association Forum on the Construction Law (2014)

"What to Expect From Michigan's Revised Uniform Arbitration Act" (co-author Caroline B. Giordano), *State Bar of Michigan Litigation Newsletter* (Summer 2013)

Articles

A Worldwide First in AI Legal Developments: The European Union's 2024 Artificial Intelligence Act

Michigan Court of Appeals Protects Act 345 Health Care Funding for Retired Police Officers and Firefighters

Sixth Circuit Rules that Brandished Firearm Could Be 'Threat of Violence' Infringing on Constitutionally-Protected Free Speech

Healthcare Litigation News Winter 2008