

Miller Canfield Attorney Tom O'Brien Recognized in State Bar of Michigan Legal Milestone

April 2, 2026

The State Bar of Michigan has selected the 1976 federal criminal case successfully defended by Miller Canfield attorney Tom O'Brien as the 45th Michigan Legal Milestone, recognizing its significance in Michigan legal history.

The case involved two nurses at the Ann Arbor Veterans Hospital who were charged with murdering and poisoning patients. After a six-month trial that drew extensive international media attention, the defendants were acquitted. The case is now being honored as an important part of the state's legal history through the Michigan Legal Milestones program, which recognizes significant people, cases and events in Michigan law.

As part of the recognition, the case will be commemorated with a bronze plaque presented by the president of the State Bar of Michigan during a community celebration on Saturday, April 18, at the Philippine American Community Center of Michigan.

O'Brien also will be a featured panelist at a symposium about the case on May 9, 2026, at 2 p.m. at the Philippine American Community Center. The symposium will include discussion of two award-winning documentaries about the case: *A Light for Justice*, produced by the Historical Society of the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan, and *That Strange Summer*, produced by the Michigan State University Department of Journalism.

"We are proud to see Tom and this extraordinary case recognized as part of Michigan's legal history," said Miller Canfield CEO Michael Palizzi. "This designation reflects not only the significance of the case itself, but also Tom's outstanding advocacy in one of the most highly scrutinized criminal trials of its time."

O'Brien is a member of Miller Canfield's litigation team and has built a distinguished career representing clients in complex, high-stakes matters.

The Michigan Legal Milestones program honors landmark legal cases, institutions and individuals that have shaped the state's legal heritage.