



## NICHOLAS J.P. MEROS

### **PARTNER**

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Nicholas J.P. Meros is a Partner in the Tallahassee office of Shutts & Bowen LLP, where he is a member of the Appellate Practice Group.

Nick represents public and private clients in high profile, high stakes litigation and appeals, specializing in complex constitutional, administrative, and environmental litigation. Nick has briefed and argued dispositive motions before state and federal trial courts and has briefed and argued appeals before Florida's district courts of appeal, the Florida Supreme Court, and the Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals.

### Government & Administrative Litigation

Nick regularly represents Florida state agencies and private clients in constitutional and administrative litigation in state and federal courts. Nick litigates all forms of complex statutory and constitutional challenges, including separation of powers, freedom of speech and assembly, due process, equal protection, election law, public records and sunshine law violations, and environmental law.

Before joining Shutts & Bowen, Nick was Senior Deputy General Counsel and chief litigator for Governor Ron DeSantis. In that role, he defended the Florida Governor in constitutional challenges to his authority and policies, the Florida Department of State in challenges to Florida's election laws and redistricting litigation, the Florida Department of Business & Professional Regulation in constitutional challenges to assignment of benefit and other property insurance statutes, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection in permitting challenges and environmental litigation, and the Florida Department of Transportation in constitutional challenges to its spending authority.

In addition to his active litigation portfolio, Nick provided legal counsel to the Governor, his senior staff, and the senior leadership of Florida's executive agencies while overseeing the strategic legal policy and litigation portfolios for the Florida Department of State, Department of Transportation, Department of Environmental Protection, Department of Business and Professional Regulation, Department of Revenue, Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, Office of Insurance Regulation,

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Office of Financial Regulation, and the Florida Lottery. Nick also advised the Governor and his General Counsel on the appointment of 207 judges to Florida's trial and appellate courts, including two justices to the Florida Supreme Court.

### Real Property Litigation

Nick represents landowners and developers in land use, eminent domain, and other real property litigation in state and federal courts and before the Division of Administrative Hearings. He also represents private clients in their administrative and regulatory matters before Florida's state agencies, especially the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Department of Transportation, the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, and the Office of Insurance Regulation and Office of Financial Regulation.

### Appellate Practice

Nick has handled numerous civil litigation and original writ proceedings before Florida's appellate courts, including cases of first impression in the areas of Florida constitutional law and environmental law. He has presented oral argument before the Florida Supreme Court and the United States Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit.

### Background

Nick graduated from the University of Virginia with a Bachelor of Arts in Government and History, and a Master of Arts in International Affairs and was a member of the University's 3-time ACC Championship Men's Tennis Team. Nick graduated from Vanderbilt University Law School, after which he clerked for the First District Court of Appeal and the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Florida. After his clerkships, and before joining the Executive Office of the Governor, Nick was a litigation associate for a national Am Law 75 firm.

### High Profile Litigation

- Represents Florida Governor in First and Fourteenth Amendment challenge to executive order removing Ninth Circuit State Attorney from office. *Caicedo v. DeSantis*, 2024 WL 2317962 (MD Fla. 2024).
- Represents Florida's Secretary of State in National Voter Registration Act (NVRA) and Voting Rights Act (VRA) challenge to Florida's voter registration verification scheme. *Florida Rising Together v. Byrd*, 6:24-cv-01682 (MD Fla. 2024).
- Represents Florida Governor as amicus in dispute over method to fill vacancy in county school board. *Golden v. Satcher*, --- So. 3d ---, No. 2D2024-1593, 2024 WL 3733177 (Fla. 2d DCA Aug. 9, 2024, 2024).

- Represents Florida Governor in Full Faith and Credit Clause challenge to executive order precluding former felon from holding office in Florida. *Bailey v. DeSantis*, 1D2024-1643 (1st DCA 2024).
- Represented the Florida Governor in First and Fourteenth Amendment challenge to the 2021 “Anti-Riot” bill, including in the appeal to the Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals and the certified question to the Florida Supreme Court. *Dream Defenders v. Governor of the State of Florida*, 559 F. Supp. 3d 1238 (N.D. Fla. 2021); *aff’d* 57 F.4th 879 (11th Cir. 2023); *question certified* 389 So. 3d 413 (Fla. 2024).
- Represented Florida’s Secretary of State in NVRA challenge to Florida’s original signature requirement for voter registration applications; appeal is ongoing before the Eleventh Circuit. *Vote. Org v. Byrd*, 700 F.Supp.3d 1047 (N.D. Fla. 2023); --- F.4th --- (11th Cir. 2025).
- Represented Florida Governor in First Amendment challenge to order deactivating college chapter of activist organizations. *Students for Justice in Palestine at UF v. Rodrigues*, 2024 WL 374543 (ND Fla. 2024); 2024 WL 371875 (ND Fla. 2024).
- Represented Secretary of Florida Department of Transportation in Fourteenth Amendment challenge to state law requiring travelers to use restrooms aligning with their biological sex. *Women in Struggle v. Bain*, 2023 WL 6541031 (MD Fla. 2023).
- Represented Governor in federal preemption challenge to Florida statute imposing additional penalties for human trafficking. *Farmworker Association of Florida v. DeSantis*, 2023 WL 8878306 (SD Fla. 2023).
- Represented Florida Governor and Secretary of State in NVRA and VRA challenge to Florida’s felon voter registration system. *Florida Rights Restoration Committee v. DeSantis*, No. 1:23-cv-22688 (S.D. Fla. 2022).
- Represented Florida Governor in First Amendment challenge by family members challenging the placement of their relatives in foster care. *Families A Through V v. DeSantis*, 658 F. Supp. 3d 1063 (ND Fla. 2023).
- Represented Florida Governor in Clean Water Act and National Environmental Policy Act challenge to wastewater discharge from former phosphate plant. *Center for Biological Diversity v. DeSantis*, 2022 WL 899677 (MD Fla. 2022).
- Represented Florida Governor in quo warranto proceeding challenging his authority to suspend ineligible Broward County school board member-elect. *Velez v. DeSantis*, 376 So. 3d 11 (Fla. 4th DCA 2023).
- Represented Secretary of Florida Department of Environmental Protection in first of its kind challenge to local government awarding legal rights to elements of nature. *Wilde Cypress Branch v. Hamilton* 386 So.3d 1020 (6th DCA 2024).

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### Practice Areas

Appellate

### Industry Focus

Government

### Accolades

- Florida Super Lawyers, "Rising Star," 2020

### Education

- Vanderbilt University Law School, J.D., 2015
- University of Virginia, M.A., International Affairs, 2011
- University of Virginia, B.A., in Government and History, *with distinction*, 2009
  - University of Virginia Men's Tennis Team (3-time ACC Champions)

### Bar Admissions

Florida

### Court Admissions

- United States Court of Appeals, Eleventh Circuit
- U.S. District Court, Northern District of Florida
- U.S. District Court, Middle District of Florida
- U.S. District Court, Southern District of Florida
- U.S. District Court, District of Columbia

### Professional and Civic

- Republican National Lawyers Association, Member
- Vanderbilt Law Alumni Interview Program
- Federalist Society for Law and Public Policy Studies, Member
  - Florida Young Lawyers Chapter, Member

## Media Mentions

- "[Justices parse controversial FL protest law](#)," *The Miami Times* (October 10, 2023)
- "[Florida judge rejects lawsuit against Gov. Ron DeSantis over migrant flights](#)," *Orlando Weekly* (November 15, 2022)
- "[Florida officials, developer take aim against "rights of nature" measure in court hearing](#)," *Politico Pro* (April 26, 2022)
- "[Federal judge tangles with lawyers over anti-riot law pushed by DeSantis](#)," *Orlando Sentinel* (August 30, 2021)
- "[Judge Questions State Over Protest Law](#)," *News Daytona Beach* (August 30, 2021)

## Publications

- Co-Author – "Know the Limits: A Primer on Construction Defect Statutes of Limitation and Repose," *PileDriver Magazine*, Issue 2, 2019, Vol. 16, No. 2