

# STARN • O'TOOLE • MARCUS & FISHER

A LAW CORPORATION



## **Director**

dchin@starnlaw.com

808-537-6100

## **Education**

**University of Hawaii, William S. Richardson  
School of Law**

J.D. (1995)

**Stanford University**

B.A., English (1988)

## **Areas of Practice:**

Commercial Litigation, Municipal Litigation, Administrative  
Law, Government Relations, Corporate Law

## **Senior Management Experience:**

Hawaii Lieutenant Governor

Hawaii Attorney General

Executive Committee, National Association of Attorneys  
General

Chair, Conference of Western Attorneys General

Policy Chair, Democratic Attorneys General Association

Honolulu Managing Director

Honolulu First Deputy Prosecuting Attorney

Honolulu Police Commissioner

## **Professional Activities:**

Licensed in Hawaii

Director, American Judicature Society

Director, Leadership Center for Attorney General Studies

Chair, Hawaii Book & Music Festival

ABA, National Association of Attorneys General

Representative

Mediator, Mediation Center of Hawaii

## **Presentation/ Articles:**

["The Fight Against the Travel Ban", The Regulatory Review,  
University of Pennsylvania Law Review](#)

["Getting Front and Center to Confront Prejudice", Expert  
Forum, Law and Policy Analysis, May 26, 2022](#)

## DOUG CHIN

Doug Chin has extensive experience in state and federal courts, from Hawaii to the United States Supreme Court, and experience in managing state and local government agencies at the highest levels. Mr. Chin focuses his practice in commercial litigation, administrative law and government relations. Mr. Chin is rated **AV Preeminent®** by **Martindale-Hubbell®**, the highest rating possible, for his skill and integrity. Mr. Chin has been named to the **The Best Lawyers in America®** list in the practice areas of Commercial Litigation, Government Relations Practice, Administrative/Regulatory Law and Civil Rights Law. Mr. Chin has been named a **"Lawyer of the Year"** in Honolulu by **The Best Lawyers in America®**, in the practice area of **Civil Rights Law (2023)**. Mr. Chin has been recognized as a "Litigation Star" by *Benchmark Litigation*.

## Litigation Experience

In 2020, Mr. Chin, on behalf of a major international auto distributor, obtained a unanimous jury verdict in a federal trial reducing the damages sought by plaintiffs from \$42 million to one dollar (\$1), in addition to being awarded substantial counterclaim damages.

In 2019, Mr. Chin obtained a complete defense judgement in federal court related to an ocean injury case while representing a hotel resort owner and operator. The case was affirmed on appeal to the U.S. Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals in 2020. Also in 2019, he successfully represented the City & County of Honolulu in ocean fatality litigation in federal court.

As a state and Honolulu County prosecutor for more than 15 years, Mr. Chin tried approximately 50 jury cases to verdict.

Mr. Chin was recognized with a "Top Gun" award for winning the most trials in a calendar year out of 100 Honolulu prosecutors. In 2006, Mr. Chin was appointed First Deputy Prosecutor and then became Acting Prosecuting Attorney in 2010.

## Attorney General, State of Hawaii

*Hawaii v. Trump* – First attorney general in the nation to successfully obtain an injunction to stop the President's second and third executive orders banning travel from certain Muslim-majority countries, a case that received national exposure and was eventually heard by the United States Supreme Court. For his efforts, Mr. Chin in 2017 was recognized by the Hawaii State Bar Association as its

“Champion for Social Justice”, and by the Council on American Islamic Relations as a “Defender of Liberty”. (Mr. Chin participated in the panel discussion, “Does Hawaii Welcome Immigrants?” hosted by Zocalo/Daniel K. Inouye Institute. Watch video here. Mr. Chin also posted about the case in The American Constitution Society’s Expert Forum blog, “Getting Front and Center to Confront Prejudice”.

*Environmental Litigation* – Led negotiations resulting in \$15 million settlement to the state department of land and natural resources to restore coral reefs after a shipping company spilled millions of gallons of molasses into Honolulu Harbor.

*Hospital Public to Private Governance* – Successfully closed complex transaction in response to Hawaii legislature bill to transfer management of a public state hospital to a private entity in one year. Litigated employee contract terms related to the transition before the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals and led negotiations leading to mutual settlement.

*Consumer Protection* – Initiated lawsuit that successfully stopped the U.S. Secretary of Education from reversing decision to forgive student loans issued fraudulently by for-profit colleges.

*Medical Cannabis Dispensary Regulation* – Implemented new state law granting licenses for the first time to medical cannabis dispensaries in Hawaii. Co-chaired a national working group through the National Association of Attorneys General made up of 29 states with various forms of legalized cannabis legislation.

During Mr. Chin’s term as the state’s Attorney General from 2015-2018, he was the first Hawaii Attorney General to chair the Conference of Western Attorneys General, the first to serve on the Executive Committee of the National Association of Attorneys General, and the first to serve as the policy chair for the Democratic Attorneys General Association.

### **Other Government Experience**

Mr. Chin served as the Hawaii Lieutenant Governor in 2018. From 2010 to 2013, under Honolulu Mayor Peter Carlisle, Mr. Chin served as the Managing Director for the City & County of Honolulu, during which he was responsible for 23 municipal government agencies and more than 10,000 employees with an annual operating budget of \$2 billion and negotiated complex matters ranging from public employee contracts to energy sustainability initiatives.

### **Community**

Mr. Chin has served on multiple boards outside of work, including the national Leadership Center for Attorney General Studies, the Hawaii Book and Music Festival, the American Judicature Society, and the local YMCA and American Youth Soccer Organization (AYSO) chapters. In 2020, Mr. Chin was appointed and unanimously confirmed to serve a five-year term on the Honolulu Police

Commission.