

Speaker Biography



Honorable Paul R. Michel

Paul R. Michel was appointed to the United States Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit in March of 1988. On December 25, 2004, he assumed the duties of Chief Judge, a position he must relinquish in February, 2011. Chief Judge Michel has written over 300 opinions in patent, trademark, takings, contract, tax, international trade, veterans' rights, and government personnel cases. He is the recipient of the Eli Whitney Prize, the Katz-Kiley Prize, and the Jefferson Medal for "outstanding contribution... to the progress of science and useful arts." In September 2001, he was made a Member of Honor of the Fédération Internationale des Conseils en Propriété Industrielle (FICPI), the worldwide organization of patent attorneys in private practice. He has addressed FICPI World Congresses and Forums annually for over a decade. Since 2003, he has been named by Managing Intellectual Property magazine as one of the 50 Most Influential People in the world in intellectual property. In March 2007, Chief Judge Michel was awarded the New York Intellectual Property Law Association's Fifth Annual Outstanding Public Service Award.

Prior to his appointment, Chief Judge Michel served in the executive and legislative branches of the government for 22 years. Following graduation from Williams College in 1963 and the University of Virginia Law School in 1966, he served as Assistant District Attorney and Deputy District Attorney for Investigations in Philadelphia under Arlen Specter; as Assistant Special Watergate Prosecutor under Leon Jaworski, responsible for the Howard Hughes-Bebe Rebozo-Rosemary Woods slush fund investigation; and under Dick Thornburgh as Deputy Chief of the Justice Department's Public Integrity Section directing the "Koreagate" investigation. From 1975 to 1976 he was assistant counsel for the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence (Church Committee), which investigated abuses of civil liberties in certain programs of U.S. intelligence agencies that targeted American citizens. In 1978 he was appointed by Benjamin Civiletti as an Associate Deputy Attorney General, helping to supervise U.S. Attorneys, the FBI, and the Marshals Service. From April 1981 until March of 1988, he served on Senator Arlen Specter's staff, including as Chief of Staff.

Since 2004, he has been a member of the Judicial Conference of the United States, the governing body of the Judicial Branch, and since 2005 he has served on its Executive Committee by appointment of the Chief Justice of the United States.