

MVP: Latham's Matthew Brill

By Christopher Cole

Law360 (November 24, 2025, 4:00 PM EST) -- Matthew Brill, global chair of the connectivity, privacy and information practice at Latham & Watkins LLP, helped steer this year's \$34.5 billion Charter and Cox tie-up and joined with other firms to defeat net neutrality rules, making him one of the 2025 Law360 Telecommunications MVPs.

His biggest accomplishment:

Brill, who is also a member of Latham's Supreme Court and appellate practice, works on both major litigation and telecom mergers — and saw a banner year on both fronts.

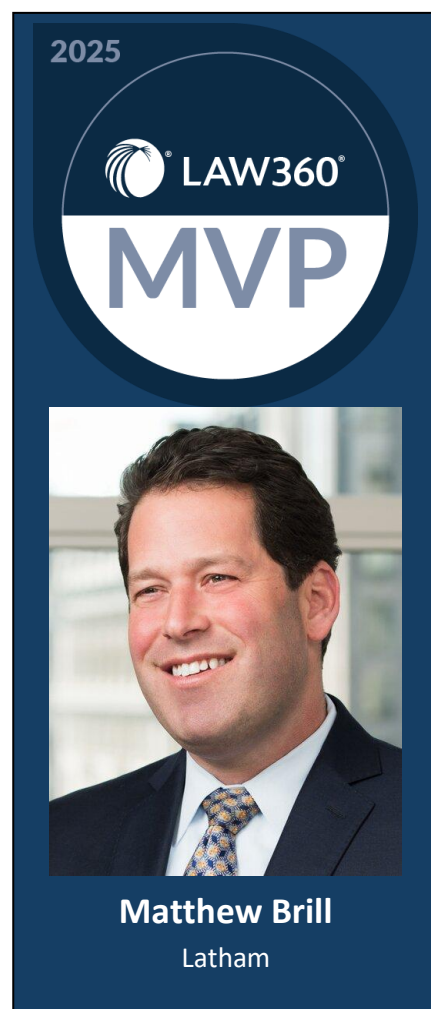
Not only has he represented Cox in the still-pending combination with Charter, but he worked on the cable industry's behalf in one of the year's biggest telecom cases: helping persuade the Sixth Circuit to reject net neutrality rules.

Under the Biden-era rules, the Federal Communications Commission sought to reclassify internet service providers as telecom carriers subject to heavier regulation. Advocates say the rules are needed to prevent the slowing or blocking of web traffic. But the industry argued the FCC lacked legal authority to switch the status of ISPs.

After a Sixth Circuit decision blocking the FCC rules in January, broadband providers remain classified as more lightly regulated information services — a big win for Brill's cable industry clients at NCTA – The Internet & Television Association.

Brill said the past year "involved both market-leading transactions in the communications sector and high-profile appellate proceedings arising from the FCC's rule."

"I felt fortunate to be involved in the industry in those two very different ways, both navigating the regulatory process and structuring major transactions, and being involved in the most consequential appeal," he told Law360.



On the deal side, along with the planned Charter-Cox merger, Brill represented Lumen Technologies in the \$5.75 billion sale of its Mass Markets fiber-to-the-home business to AT&T.

He was lead regulatory counsel for Skydance Media in its merger with Paramount Global that recently closed after FCC approval. And he also led a team advising Hotwire Communications in its sale to funds affiliated with Brookfield Asset Management.

"I've rarely been involved in so many consequential deals all in one year," Brill said, calling it an "extraordinarily busy" time to work on some of the industry's highest-profile transactions.

The dynamic between working on major deals versus regulatory disputes "really fluctuates," depending on how busy the market is and what's happening at the FCC, Brill said. As opposed to 2024, there are fewer rules to challenge, and "the deal activity has picked up quite a lot," he said.

His biggest challenge:

Brill, a former FCC senior official, still spent a big chunk of the last year juggling cases that involved rules from the last administration, and not just in the net neutrality arena. Brill has the distinction of working on three major appeals of FCC regulations in just the past year.

He's played a key role on legal teams contesting the way the FCC devised new rules aimed at combating discrimination in broadband deployment under a new federal law. And he's also working with several groups fighting a data breach reporting rule issued two years ago.

Industry groups are still awaiting a court decision from the Eighth Circuit on the discrimination rules, as well as a ruling from the full Sixth Circuit on whether to rehear the data breach reporting case. But Brill said he's optimistic.

Much of the last year was devoted to "simultaneously challenging in court three of the FCC signature rulemaking decisions," he said, also noting the difficulty of persuading a court of appeals to overturn a major FCC rule.

"The odds can be stacked against you, even though the Supreme Court has clarified the administrative law standards and made clear that agencies don't get discretion in construing statutory provisions," Brill said. "I think, institutionally, courts have some reluctance to overturn major rulemaking decisions."

"Despite the challenges of going up against the federal government and challenging rules, we're very proud of the track record we've achieved," he added.

Why he's a telecom and appellate lawyer:

Brill said he got involved in the telecom arena right after the 1996 Telecommunications Act passed, which was a major legislative rewrite of the original Communications Act. He described that as "a pretty seismic event reshaping telephone competition, encouraging cable operators to get into the telephone business and telephone companies to get into the video business — and maybe most fundamentally, it was the dawn of the internet era."

"And it quickly became apparent to me that working on legal and policy issues in this arena is incredibly relevant to our lives," he said.

"How we communicate, how we access and share information, is just so fundamental to our politics, our civic society, our entertainment, to democracy, that I was really drawn by the relevance of this work," on both the telecom and media sides, he said.

"And so all of those things made it fascinating to me and have kept me engaged throughout what is now a nearly 30-year career," Brill said.

His advice to junior attorneys:

An important part of Brill's role as practice chair is mentoring lawyers who are just entering private practice soon after law school or wrapping up a clerkship.

One point he emphasizes to those growing into the profession is making sure they fully grasp the issues facing their clients on the ground, not only the legal concepts. He described this as "really getting to know the client's business and understanding the challenges from their perspective."

"The practice of law in a firm is not an abstract or academic exercise. It's a very pragmatic exercise understanding the client's needs in their business, in their interactions with the government and in their interactions with other companies, whether it's in litigation or in deals," Brill said. "And so I always try to advise younger lawyers to see things from the client's perspective, to make sure their advice is practical and actionable."

--As told to Christopher Cole. Editing by Melissa Treolo.

Law360's MVPs are attorneys who have distinguished themselves from their peers over the past year through high-stakes litigation, record-breaking deals and complex global matters. A team of Law360 editors selected the 2025 MVP winners after reviewing nearly 900 submissions.