

# 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

Honolulu Managing Director

Honolulu First Deputy Prosecuting Attorney

Chair, Honolulu Police Commission

## **Professional Activities:**

Licensed in Hawaii

Director, American Judicature Society

Director, Leadership Center for Attorney General Studies

ABA, National Association of Attorneys General

Representative

## **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](#)

## DOUGLAS S. CHIN

Hawaii litigation lawyer Douglas S. 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 Appellate Practice, Commercial Litigation, Government Relations Practice, Administrative/Regulatory Law and Civil Rights Law. Mr. Chin has been named the **"Lawyer of the Year"** in Honolulu by **The Best Lawyers in America®** in the practice areas of **Civil Rights Law (2023)** and **Administrative/Regulatory Law (2025)**.

Mr. Chin has been selected to the **Hawaii Super Lawyers®** list in 2024, in the practice area of **Business Litigation**.

Mr. Chin has been recognized as a "Litigation Star" by **Benchmark Litigation**.

Mr. Chin is recognized by **Chambers and Partners USA Leading Lawyers for Business** in the practice area General: Commercial Litigation.

## **Litigation Highlights**

In 2024, Mr. Chin appeared before the Hawaii Supreme Court representing the State Land Use Commission in a case examining the use of agricultural lands or farm dwellings for short-term vacation rentals.

Three Buckets for Evaluation of Land Use: Watch Mr. Chin's argument at 13:15.

In September 2024, the Hawaii Supreme Court unanimously upheld *Rosehill v. State of Hawai'i*, Land Use Commission, where farm dwellings in agricultural districts could not to be used as short-term vacation rentals. Mr. Chin, Christina Ohira, Eric Robinson and Cori Terayama acted as Special Deputy Attorneys General representing the Land Use Commission.

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.

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.

### **Prior Government Experience**

Mr. Chin served in state government as the Hawaii Lieutenant Governor in 2018 and as the Hawaii Attorney General from 2015-2018. 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 served in city government as the Managing Director for the City & County of Honolulu from 2010 to 2013, as Acting City Prosecutor in 2010, and as First Deputy Prosecuting Attorney from 2006 to 2010.

### **Community**

Mr. Chin has served on multiple boards outside of work, including the national Leadership Center for Attorney General Studies, the Honolulu Police Commission, the Hawaii Book and Music Festival, the American Judicature Society, and the local Easter Seals, YMCA and American Youth Soccer Organization (AYSO) chapters.