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Bird Marella Secures Mistrial in Defense of Backpage.com Executive

In an abrupt end to a trial expected to last three months, Bird Marella won a mistrial in the highly-publicized Backpage.com federal jury trial. On September 14, 2021, U.S. District Judge Brnovich granted the defense motion that the prosecutors had presented irrelevant and inflammatory testimony in violation of her prior orders.

Principals Gary Lincenberg, Ariel Neuman, and Gopi Panchapakesan represent one of the prior owners of the holding company of the now-seized classifieds website.

Lead counsel Gary Lincenberg told *Law360*, "We are grateful for the court's recognition that the government violations of court orders were so serious as to require a declaration of mistrial."

The federal case involves significant First Amendment and Communications Decency Act issues that impact the technology and publishing industries as courts assess the potential liability of internet platform providers.

Read more on the Court's mistrial ruling here.

To read Ariel Neuman's *Law360* article on the 2016 California Court dismissal of the criminal charges against Backpage executives, click here.