

Press Coverage | July 1, 2022

How Would a School Challenge a Grant of Rights? We Asked a Lawyer

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Mark Wilhelm, an associate with Troutman Pepper, is quoted in *The Athletic* article, "[How Would a School Challenge a Grant of Rights? We Asked a Lawyer.](#)" The article discusses the new round of conference realignment in college sports, including the University of Southern California and University of Los Angeles's plan to move to the Big Ten league in 2024, and the ACC, Big-12 and Pac-12's grant of rights agreements, which were in possession of only a few people including Mark.

"If you came to me in my normal practice, and you said, 'Mark, I want to draft an agreement that does this sort of thing. Can you put something together?' My gut reaction is that we're looking at a 20-, 40-, 50-page document," said Wilhelm, who earned his law degree in 2015 and now handles corporate mergers and acquisitions cases at Philadelphia firm Troutman Pepper. "Because there are a lot of terms, a lot of situations we want to consider — a lot of exceptions we want to include. That's not what these documents are. These documents are a couple pages."

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Wilhelm said there are four ways for schools to challenge such a deal: Leave the conference and leave its rights behind; sue to try to get the rights back; try to negotiate a deal with the conference and the remaining members for an exit fee that is less than the full amount that would be forfeited; and hope the league dissolves and the grant of rights dissolves with it.