

**VARTABEDIAN, Steven Michael**

ASSOCIATE JUSTICE, COURT OF APPEAL, Fifth Appellate District

**Appointment/Election:** Appointed [succeeding Associate Justice Charles F. Hamlin, retired], by Governor Deukmejian Sept. 13, 1989, confirmed by Commission on Judicial Appointments Oct. 19, 1989, oath same day, and confirmed by electorate to 8-year term Nov. 6, 1990; retained by electorate for 12-year term, Nov. 3, 1998.

**Other Judicial Office:** Judge, Superior Court, Fresno County, March 20, 1987 (date of oath) to Oct. 19, 1989, appointed to newly-created position by Governor Deukmejian March 16, 1987. Judge, Municipal Court, Consolidated Fresno Judicial District, Fresno County, Sept. 21, 1983 (date of oath) to March 20, 1987, appointed to newly-created position by Governor Deukmejian Sept. 19, 1983, and elected in 1984. Presiding Judge, Jan. 1, 1985 to March 20, 1987. Judge, Justice Court, Sanger Judicial District, Fresno County, May 29, 1981 (date of oath) to Sept. 21, 1983, appointed May 13, 1981 by Fresno County Board of Supervisors, and elected in 1982.

**Past Employment:** Private law practice, Fresno, Calif., 1976-83 (partner, Vartabedian & [Charles] Poochigian.

**Memberships/Awards:** Member: Fresno County Bar Assn., 1976—; Santa Clara Univ. Law School, Board of Visitors, 1992-94. Recipient, “Outstanding Service to Education Award” (1982), from Sanger Unified School District.

**Teaching/Lectures/Panelist:** Lecturer (Business Law), Calif. State Univ., Fresno, 1976-82. Panelist: Litigation Section of State Bar program “To Appeal or Not Appeal,” 1995; McGeorge School of Law Symposium, “Victim’s Rights in California,” 1992.

**Publications:** Author: “Enhancing Sentences with Prior Felony Convictions,” 23 Pacific LJ 1051 (1992); “Dismissal and Prearraignment Delay: When Should the Clock Start?” 26 Judges’ Journal, No. 1, p. 31 (1987); “*People v. Rodriguez*, Return of Judicial Comment to Deadlocked Juries,” 27 Calif. Courts Commentary, No. 1, p. 6 (Jan 1987); and “Striking a Delicate Balance in Sex Abuse Cases,” 24 Judges’ Journal, No. 4, p. 16 (1985).

**Noteworthy Cases:** Noteworthy appellate opinions authored by Justice Vartabedian include: *Romo v. Ford Motor Company* (2002) 99 Cal. App. 4th 1115 (including issues of cure of jury misconduct and corporate malice); *People v. Patten*, (1992) 9 Cal.App. 4th 1718 (involving constitutionality of statute allowing

victim-witness in certain sex offense cases the presence of support persons during testimony); *Rosenfeld Construction Co. v. Superior Court*, (1991) 235 Cal.App. 3d 566, 286 Cal.Rptr. 609 (involving application of test of “substantial relationship between the prior representation and the current representation” in determining whether law firm must be disqualified from representing present client).

**Education:** J.D. (May 1975, magna cum laude), Univ. of Santa Clara [now Santa Clara Univ.] Law School, Santa Clara, Calif.; B.A. (June 1972, Political Science, summa cum laude), Calif. State Univ., Fresno (Phi Kappa Phi; and Blue Key); Graduate: Roosevelt High School (1968), Sequoia Junior High School (1965), and Winchell Elementary School (1962), all in Fresno, Calif.

**Personal:** Born May 8, 1950; Fresno, Calif.; Married. Three daughters.

**Interests:** Enjoys spending time with his family.

**Admission:** Admitted to Calif. Bar and to U.S. Dist. Court, Eastern Dist. of Calif., Dec. 18, 1975.

**Political Affiliation/Religion:** Republican; Presbyterian (First Armenian Presbyterian Church, Fresno; Elder, 1976—).