

Rising Star: Weil's Timothy Burns

By Al Barbarino

Law360 (August 15, 2025, 4:00 PM EDT) -- Timothy Burns of Weil Gotshal & Manges LLP led the team representing Glencore, the Canada Pension Plan Investment Board and British Columbia Investment Management Corp. on their exit from Viterra through its \$18 billion sale to Bunge, earning him a spot among the private equity practitioners under age 40 honored by Law360 as Rising Stars.

The biggest deal of his career:

Burns said he started his legal career working on Glencore's original acquisition of Viterra as a first-year associate at Bennett Jones LLP. A decade later, he led the Weil team advising a selling consortium of Glencore, CPPIB and BCI on their exit from Viterra through its \$18 billion sale to Bunge.

With three clients at the table — each with its own objectives and timeline — he said he had to manage competing interests in a high-stakes setting. The deal closed on July 2 after clearing various regulatory hurdles.

"It felt like a really full circle moment," Burns said. "It was a very interesting dynamic to manage. ... All [three clients] had different focuses and different investment theses, and had been in the asset for different periods of time."

The most interesting case he's worked on lately:

Burns recently advised BCI on its \$3.1 billion acquisition, along with Searchlight Capital Partners, of Consolidated Communications. The take-private nature of the transaction deviated from some of the more common partner deals and control deals by players in the institutional investing space, he said.

"It was a point of personal pride for me, and was an interesting transaction because BCI had not done a ton of take-privates before," Burns said, noting his excitement about helping a major client grow into new deal types.

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Timothy Burns
Weil Gotshal & Manges

Age: 38

Home base: New York

Position: Partner

Law school: Queen's University
Canada

First job after law school: Associate
at Bennett Jones

Burns said he advised on governance, diligence and, importantly, the strategic alignment between BCI and Searchlight.

"It was a very fulfilling experience," he said. "Helping an institutional investor navigate a U.S. public M&A transaction — that's the kind of work that sticks with you."

Another notable case:

Among other standout deals for Burns, he advised on CPPIB's investment in Apollo-backed Novolex as part of Novolex's acquisition of Pactiv Evergreen — a \$6.7 billion transaction that closed earlier this year.

The transaction was supported with funds from both CPPIB and Apollo, which has been a majority shareholder in Novolex since 2022. CPPIB invested \$1 billion into the deal to become a minority shareholder in the merged business, the companies said when the deal was announced in December.

The layered structure required navigating both the investment in Novolex and the take-private of another company.

"It was a really intense transaction," he said. "The [CPPIB] team is extremely sophisticated, and it was a real pleasure to work with them on that one."

What motivates him:

Whether it's his clients or colleagues, "What motivates me is being able to help others succeed," Burns said.

As a Canadian himself, he takes particular pride in supporting Canadian institutional investors as they execute high-profile, cross-border deals.

"There's definitely some personal pride for me in seeing these Canadian investors do well, and having the opportunity to play a role in it is pretty fantastic," Burns said.

That motivation extends to internal collaboration: "I love seeing associates do well, just as I love seeing other partners that get brought into these deals do well," he said.

Why he became a private equity attorney:

While in Canada earlier in his career, Burns said his practice had been more general, but that moving to the U.S. allowed him to zero in on a specialty. But he didn't choose private equity just for the nuances surrounding these types of deal structures; it also came down to the people.

"I knew that I liked working with big teams, and I liked working on transactional work, and I liked M&A broadly, but finding a good group of people within Weil private equity group that I really enjoyed being around is what led me to private equity," Burns said.

How he thinks the practice will change in the next 10 years:

Burns acknowledged that predicting the next decade in private equity law is a tall task, but he said that's part of the job's appeal. His practice must adapt quickly and seamlessly to market trends.

Recently, Burns spent much of his time focused on the resurgence of hybrid capital and preferred equity investments. These flexible capital solutions are booming in a market where full exits remain elusive, he said.

"I follow what the client is doing, as opposed to boxing myself into a specific type of deal," Burns said. "A lot is going to change, and I'm excited to see what happens."

--As told to Al Barbarino. Editing by Drashti Mehta.

Law360's Rising Stars are attorneys under 40 whose legal accomplishments belie their age. A team of Law360 editors selected the 2025 Rising Stars winners after reviewing more than 1,100 submissions. Attorneys had to be under 40 as of April 30, 2025, to be eligible for this year's award.