



James A. Kahl

PARTNER

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BIOGRAPHY

Mr. Kahl represents corporations, trade associations, advocacy groups, and tax-exempt organizations, as well as political action committees (PACs), ballot committees and other political committees, regarding federal and state campaign finance, lobbying, and government ethics laws and regulations. With an extensive background working in and practicing before federal agencies, he helps clients navigate the complex regulatory maze that impacts political activity.

Here are just some of the ways that Mr. Kahl helps Whiteford's clients:

- Advises clients regarding their ability to make political contributions to federal, state and local candidates using corporate, PAC or personal funds, and their ability to provide gifts or other items of value to public officials.
- Helps clients comply with their registration and reporting obligations under federal and state lobbying laws and the Foreign Agents Registration Act.
- Audits clients' political activities, and develops tailored compliance programs and policies to minimize risks.
- Provides political law training programs to clients' executives and key employees so that they understand the legal risks posed by political activities and know the steps to take to keep their employer out of trouble.

PRACTICES & INDUSTRIES

Political Law Compliance

Nonprofit Organizations and Associations

Tax-Exempt Organizations
Business and Corporate

EDUCATION

George Washington University
School of Law, 1981, J.D.

University of Notre Dame, 1978,
B.A., with high honors

ADMISSIONS

District of Columbia
Florida

- Represents clients before federal and state campaign finance, lobbying and ethics regulators in regard to agency audits, investigations, advisory opinion requests, and other regulatory matters.

The entirety of his legal career has involved representing clients before or serving in senior legal positions in U.S. government agencies. From 2002 to 2007, Mr. Kahl served as Deputy General Counsel of the Federal Election Commission.

There he helped lead the 130-person Office of General Counsel in conducting investigations of potential violations of campaign finance laws, and advising the FEC in connection with rulemakings, advisory opinions, and audits of political committees.

Prior to that, Mr. Kahl was a partner in the Washington, D.C. office of Hopkins & Sutter, served as the principal deputy to the General Counsel at the Small Business Administration, and was the number two-ranking official at the U.S. Office of Special Counsel – the agency that enforces whistleblower protection laws and the Hatch Act across the federal government. On a daily basis, Fortune 100 companies, major trade and professional organizations, and other entities and individuals engaged in political activities turn to Mr. Kahl for practical and cost-effective political law compliance advice and solutions. He is a frequent speaker and author on political law issues. Mr. Kahl also filed a brief in the U.S. Supreme Court in support of the prevailing party in the landmark case *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission*.

MEMBERSHIPS & ACTIVITIES

- Member: American Bar Association
- Member, ASAE
- ASAE Legal Section Council Member
- Vestry and Executive Committee Member, St. Paul's Church, Alexandria, Virginia

PRESENTATIONS & PUBLICATIONS

Presentation: "Corporate and Association Political Activity: Key 2020 Compliance Issues," [Webinar](#), (March 2020)

Presentation: "Exempt Organizations 2019 Year in Review and Key Compliance

Issues for the 2020 Election Year," Association of Corporate Counsel National Capital Region Webinar (February 2020)

Presentation: "Election Year Political Law Compliance Issues for Charitable Organizations," Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (January 2020)

Presentation: "Exploring the Opportunities and Risks of Political Activity," ASAE Association Law Symposium (June 2019)

Author: "Nonprofit Lobbying: The Rules You Need to Know," ASAE (February 2017)

Presentation: "Supporting Candidates, Growing Your PAC & Increasing the Effectiveness of Your Government Affairs Program" ASAE (May 2016)

Author: "Election 2016: Know the Rules for Supporting Candidates," ASAE (March 2016)

Quoted: "Balance Free Expression and Office Harmony in an Election Year," ASAE

Author "Citizens United, Super PACs, and Corporate Spending on Political Campaigns: How Did We Get Here and Where Are We Going?" The Federal Lawyer (June 2012)

Author "Managing Risks of Corporate Political Activity," Staffing Success (November/December 2009)

Author "FEC Must Protect Commercial Speech From the Excesses of McCain-Feingold Bill," Advertising Age (October 15, 2007)