

Stefan C. Passantino

Partner

**Practice Group Chair, Government Relations,
Political Law & Public Policy**

Overview

Former Deputy White House Counsel, Stefan is chair of Michael Best's Government Regulations & Public Policy practice where he heads the Firm's Political Law practice. Leveraging his nearly 25 years of experience to serve clients, Stefan focuses on representing corporations, interest groups, political figures, and other entities with respect to state and federal election law, ethics, campaign finance, pay-to-play, state and federal lobbying laws, internal investigations, crisis communications, Congressional oversight, and other issues. Stefan joins Michael Best after serving as Deputy Assistant to the President and Deputy Counsel where he headed the White House Compliance and Ethics programs. He maintains offices in Washington, D.C. and Atlanta.

In the 2015-2016 election cycle, Stefan helped form, and served as counsel to, some of the largest and most influential and innovative "SuperPACs" and 501(c)(4) advocacy groups in the Presidential campaign, including the Trump Presidential Transition Team. Stefan was also asked to co-chair the Republican National Lawyers Association Ballot Access Project, which coordinated and disseminated guidance on Republican Party ballot access to counsel for all candidates for President.

Some of Stefan's clients have included major multi-national corporations, tax exempt advocacy groups, political parties, and politicians, including serving as national counsel to presidential candidate and former Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, Newt Gingrich, former Speaker J. Dennis Hastert, former Governor (and now Secretary) Rick Perry, several U.S. Senators and House Members, as well as other prominent political figures and advocacy groups. In addition, Stefan serves as General Counsel to corporate entities formed by former Speaker of the House Gingrich. Stefan has provided Congressional and Executive Branch ethics and lobbying training to Members of Congress, their staff, the Administration, and private corporations for over fifteen years.



spassantino@michaelbest.com

Washington, D.C.

T. 202.747.9582

Legal Assistant

Mary Kay Bradford

mkbradford@michaelbest.com

T. 414.225.4924

Practices

Campaign Finance & Political Law
Government Relations, Political Law
& Public Policy
Litigation

Stefan was appointed Special Assistant to the Attorney General of Georgia to represent the interests of the State of Georgia in a litigation matter against the federal government.

Stefan is a co-author of the Handbook on Corporate Political Activity: Emerging Corporate Governance Issues, an overview of the legal rules and standard practices related to corporate activity in the political arena. He is a regular contributor and commentator for CNN Radio, *POLITICO*, *Bloomberg*, *The Hill*, FOX News, *Roll Call*, *The Washington Post*, National Public Radio, and *USA Today*, among others. He is a Visiting Professor on campaign finance for Georgia State University College of Law and the University of Georgia. He is also a frequent speaker on political law issues at Emory University School of Law.

Stefan was recognized by *Washingtonian Magazine* as one of the “Best Legal Minds in Washington” in the field of Campaign and Election law, and has been recognized as one of the leading political law attorneys nationwide by *Chambers USA. Law & Politics* and *Atlanta Magazine* recognized Stefan on their 2008-2016 lists of Georgia Super Lawyers and on their 2005 and 2006 lists of Georgia Super Lawyers Rising Stars. Stefan was recognized by *James Magazine* as one of “Georgia’s Most Influential People.” The Georgia Supreme Court appointed Stefan as a mentor in the *Transition into Law Practice Program* of the State Bar of Georgia in January 2009.

Professional Activities

- Vice-President for Judicial Affairs, Republican National Lawyers Association, 2016
- Co-Chair, Republican National Lawyers Association Presidential Ballot Access Initiative, July, 2015
- Founder of award-winning Pay to Play Law Blog, www.paytoplaylawblog.com
- Handbook on Corporate Political Activity: Emerging Corporate Governance Issues (First Ed., 2010)
- “Ethics Reform Meets Convention Lobbyists” Atlanta Journal Constitution, August 2008 (Co-authored with Douglas Chalmers Jr.)
- Contributor, National Journal's advocacy and lobbying online forum

Education

- Emory University School of Law, Juris Doctor (J.D.); Managing Editor of the *Emory Law Journal*
- Drew University, Bachelor of Arts (B.A.); Political Science

Admissions

- District of Columbia
- Georgia
- New York
- United States Supreme Court
- United States District Court, Northern District of Georgia
- United States District Court, Southern District of New York
- United States District Court, Eastern District of New York

- United States District Court, District of Maryland
- United States Court of Appeals, Fourth Circuit
- United States Court of Appeals, Eleventh Circuit

Related News

EVENT

May 21, 2019

Passantino Presented Keynote Address: Compliance Lessons Learned From the White House to the Boardroom at Compliance Week 2019

EVENT

February 26, 2019

Passantino presents as panelist for "Truth on Trial: Implications for Communicators – Part III"

EVENT

December 13, 2018

State Bar of Georgia

Political & D.C. Roundup

EVENT

December 3, 2018

The Federalist Society

A Perspective on the White House Counsel's Office

NEWS

September 5, 2018

Michael Best Expands Political Law Practice in Washington, D. C. with Addition of Former White House Deputy Counsel