



117th Congress John C. Stennis Congressional Staff Fellows

Nick Barbash

Legislative Director

Office of U.S. Sen. Tim Kaine



Nick Barbash serves as legislative director for U.S. Sen. Tim Kaine. He has worked for Sen. Kaine since 2013, for two years as legislative director and previously as a legislative assistant, where he handled natural resources and infrastructure issues. Before that, he served in various positions for U.S. Sen. Herb Kohl and as a project assistant for the Central & Eastern Europe desk at the National Democratic Institute. Nick is a 2005 David L. Boren National Security Education Program Scholar, focusing on the former Yugoslavia. He has a Master of Science in energy and climate policy from Johns Hopkins University and a Bachelor of Arts in political science from the University of Wisconsin. Nick was born and raised in Washington, D.C.

Jessica Berry

Clerk

Subcommittee on the Legislative Branch

Senate Committee on Appropriations



Jessica is a native of Brandon, Vermont, with over 17 years of experience in the U.S. Senate, including the last four years as Appropriations Chairman Patrick Leahy's lead staffer. In this role, Jessica is responsible for identifying and successfully shepherding through his Vermont and national projects and programmatic priorities across the 12 appropriations bills. In total, Jessica has been with U.S. Sen. Leahy for 12 years between the Appropriations and Judiciary Committees and on his personal staff, where she started as an intern. She has worked on the Appropriations Committee for a total of nine years.

Jessica took on the responsibilities of the clerk of the Legislative Branch Subcommittee two years ago, overseeing \$5.3 billion in the "smallest but mightiest" of appropriations bills. The bill covers the workings of Congress and its supporting agencies, including the U.S. Senate, Library of Congress, the Architect of the Capitol, U.S. Capitol Police, Government Accountability Office, and Congressional Budget Office.

Jessica also worked from 2008 to 2013 on the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies as the principal law enforcement and justice professional staff to then-Chairwoman Barbara Mikulski, providing funding and oversight recommendations for the Department of Justice (DOJ), directing upwards of \$30 billion annually for federal law enforcement, including the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Drug Enforcement Administration, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, U.S. Marshals Service, U.S. Attorneys, and the Federal Bureau of Prisons as well as grant-making components.

While on the Judiciary Committee from 2001 to 2005, she advanced then-ranking member Leahy's priorities related to appropriations and authorizations under DOJ and the Department of Homeland

Security. Jessica played a lead staff role in drafting and negotiating the 2005 Violence Against Women and Department of Justice Reauthorization Act. As projects director and legislative aide for Leahy from 2005 to 2008, she oversaw his priorities on the Appropriations Committee and on housing/community development policies.

Before returning to the U.S. Senate, she served as a senior policy advisor at the Department of the Interior, where she coordinated appropriations and oversight of the Land and Water Conservation Fund, which is a passion of hers. She has also worked in the criminal justice reform field.

Jessica is a proud alumna of Bowdoin College in Maine, where she received a Bachelor of Arts in government and legal studies. She has lived and studied in Argentina's Patagonia region and Stockholm, Sweden. She enjoys hiking, boating, snowshoeing, and traveling in her free time.

Becky Cairns

Professional Staff Member

Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources

House Committee on National Resources



Becky Cairns is staff director of the Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources on the House Natural Resources Committee. She is a Massachusetts native and graduate of Hamilton College, where she majored in government and French. Before joining the committee, she was a longtime staffer for her hometown member, U.S. Rep. Niki Tsongas. Becky is also a fellow with the Clean Energy Leadership Institute, a nonprofit organization based in Washington, D.C., and San Francisco that works to rebuild the next generation of clean energy leaders. Outside of work, she can be found going for long bike rides, hiking, and cheering on Boston sports teams.

Anne Marie Chotvacs

Republican Staff Director

House Committee on Appropriations



Anne Marie Chotvacs serves as the staff director for Republican members of the Appropriations Committee of the U.S. House of Representatives. She has previously held many senior-level positions in the private sector and government. Immediately prior to this role, Ms. Chotvacs was an executive with The Boeing Company, where she represented Boeing's key international business interests before Congress, executive branch agencies, and foreign governments. Before Boeing, Ms. Chotvacs spent eight years as clerk and staff director for the State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Subcommittee in the House of Representatives.

Ms. Chotvacs served earlier in her career as a professional staff member for other subcommittees of the Appropriations Committee of the House of Representatives, including the Commerce, Justice, State, and the Judiciary Subcommittee and the Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Subcommittee.

Prior to her legislative experience, Ms. Chotvacs was a budget analyst at the Department of Commerce. She entered government service through a competitive selection as a presidential management intern, serving in positions at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the Office of Management and Budget.

Ms. Chotvacs earned a master's degree in public administration from the University of Georgia and a bachelor's degree in business administration and political science from Presbyterian College. She also completed an international study abroad program at Oxford University through her college

and coursework at Georgetown University's Government Affairs Institute after completing her master's degree.

Mark Dreiling

Chief of Staff

Office of U.S. Rep. Don Bacon



Capt. Dreiling served as a space operations officer during his career in the U.S. Air Force. Before retirement, he was the test director for the Family of Advanced Beyond Light-of-Sight Terminals - a multi-billion dollar satellite communications terminals program that provides national leadership with the next generation of secure, nuclear survivable, global strategic, and tactical communications. Capt. Dreiling also served in the Joint Functional Component Command for Space for United States Strategic Command (USSTRATCOM) as the lead for integration and planning for the Air Force's newest space-based missile warning system, Space-Based

Infrared Sensor - Geostationary (SBIRS GEO). Additionally, he was the first military representative to be certified as a sensor crew lead on the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency's most advanced sensor.

Capt. Dreiling is a former chief of operations training and a certified missile warning crew commander with over 3,000 error-free hours of operations. He led multinational 16-person missile warning crews consisting of U.S. Air Force, Royal Australian Air Force, Royal Canadian Air Force, and Royal Air Force personnel. Further, he served as the chief of crew force management for the 460th Operations Support Squadron (OSS), leading his team to the first-ever, error-free Operational Readiness Inspection. His office received the IG's Professional Team Award in 2008.

Before serving in the Armed Forces, Capt. Dreiling worked for state Sen. Mark Quandahl and state Sen. Pam Brown in the Nebraska Legislature - the only single house constitutionally nonpartisan state legislative assembly in the United States. Capt. Dreiling was also a member of the freshman office staff for Congressman Lee Terry.

Capt. Dreiling's military decorations and awards include the Meritorious Service Medal, the Joint Service Commendation Medal, the Air Force Commendation Medal, the Air Force Achievement Medal, the Army Achievement Medal, and the Air Force Space Command Crew Member Excellence Award.

Capt. Dreiling is a 2021 graduate of the Naval War College with a Master of Arts in defense and strategic studies. A graduate of the University of Nebraska - Lincoln, he has been honored with the Nebraska Alumni Association's oldest recognition - the Distinguished Service Award. Capt. Dreiling was a graduate of the pilot class of the Graduate Certificate in Space Systems from the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs. He also graduated from the Advanced Space Operations School Missile Warning and Defense Advanced Course. Additionally, he is a Papillion La Vista Schools Hall of Fame member. Capt. Dreiling has also been selected as a 117th Congress Stennis Congressional Staff Fellow and recognized as a member of the HillVets 100 class of 2018.

Capt. Dreiling was the founding president of the ROTC and Military Affiliate of the Nebraska Alumni Association. He currently serves on the board of the Gillwell Foundation, which supports the Mid-America Scout Council. He is also on the advisory board for Big Red Satellite, an educational program that brings together middle and high school students with undergraduate student advisors to manufacture and launch a CubeSat into orbit as part of NASA's CubeSat Launch Initiative. An Eagle Scout, Capt. Dreiling spends his free time volunteering as a mentor for ROTC cadets and scouts.

Erik Elam

Legislative Director
Office of U.S. Sen. Dan Sullivan



Erik Elam is the legislative director for U.S. Sen. Dan Sullivan and has served on Sen. Sullivan's staff since February 2015. Mr. Elam previously served as senior policy advisor in the senator's office and as the majority staff director for the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works Subcommittee on Fisheries, Water, and Wildlife, formerly chaired by Sen. Sullivan. Prior to his current role, he served on the staff of Alaska Congressman Don Young, most recently as legislative director, where he oversaw the congressman's legislative staff and was responsible for energy and other issues under the jurisdiction of the House Natural Resources Committee.

Erik is from Cleveland, Ohio, and received a Bachelor of Arts in political science from the University of Dayton and a Master of Public Policy degree from George Mason University. In 2007, he was commissioned as an armor officer through the University of Dayton Army ROTC program and served in the Virginia Army National Guard.

Andrew Flick

Chief of Staff
Office of U.S. Rep. David Trone



Andy Flick serves as chief of staff for Congressman David Trone. Flick has served in the U.S. House of Representatives for 12 years. He began his career as a legislative aide for Congressman Ike Skelton and later worked in senior roles for Congressmen Jim Costa and Seth Moulton. Flick is a graduate of Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri, and a native of Hamilton, Ohio.

Darien Flowers

Deputy Policy Director
Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation



Darien B. Flowers is a deputy policy director with the U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation. In this capacity, he manages the Subcommittee on Tourism, Trade, and Export Promotion's jurisdiction over economic development matters related to tourism, trade, and U.S. exports. He leads a team of policy professionals charged with executing Ranking Member Roger F. Wicker's legislative and oversight agenda for the U.S. Commercial Service, part of the Department of Commerce's International Trade Administration, Corporation for Travel Promotion, the National Travel and Tourism Office, the Travel and Tourism Advisory

Board, the Tourism Policy Council, and live entertainment issues. He also focuses on aviation and national security issues under the Commerce Committee's jurisdiction, including transportation security, counterterrorism, unmanned systems, emerging technologies, and the U.S. Coast Guard.

Before joining the committee, Mr. Flowers was a senior advisor to the under secretary of transportation for policy at the Department of Transportation (DOT). In this capacity, he provided direct support to the under secretary in developing policies for DOT, generating proposals, and

providing advice regarding legislative and regulatory initiatives across all modes of transportation. Specifically, Mr. Flowers advised the under secretary on maritime, transit, and passenger rail policy, including serving as a liaison to the Amtrak board of directors and management. Additionally, he provided counsel on domestic and international aviation matters. Mr. Flowers managed several high-priority projects directly for Secretary Elaine L. Chao. These projects were department-wide initiatives and implemented her vision for effective governance.

Before joining DOT, he was a policy advisor at Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck, LLP, where he advised clients on transportation and infrastructure policy and legislation before the administration and Congress. In addition to his private sector experience, Mr. Flowers worked in the U.S. Senate, serving on the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs for then-subcommittee Ranking Member Rob Portman and in the Office of U.S. Sen. Bill Cassidy.

A native of Columbus, Ohio, Mr. Flowers earned a Bachelor of Arts from Elon University and a Master of Arts from George Mason University, where he was a Bryce Harlow Fellow. He is also a graduate of the University of Virginia's Thomas C. Sorensen Institute for Political Leadership. In the 117th Congress, Mr. Flowers was selected as a Stennis Congressional Staff Fellow. He and his wife, Kirsten, reside in Alexandria, Virginia.

Jason Gray

Senior Professional Staff Member
House Committee on Appropriations



Jason Gray serves as professional staff with the House Appropriations Committee and has held multiple roles since joining the committee in 2010. In his current position, he helps to manage committee processes for 12 appropriations bills and \$1.5 trillion in discretionary spending with a particular focus on committee rules, floor procedures, legislative drafting, budget and scorekeeping, parliamentary inquiries, and other analyses. He previously worked on the Interior and Environment Subcommittee, where he oversaw appropriations for the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of the Interior, and other related agencies.

Prior to the committee, Jason served as professional staff at the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for six years. He also spent time on assignment at the Department of Homeland Security's Domestic Nuclear Detection Office. Before joining OMB, Jason worked in both the private and nonprofit sectors.

He received a Master of Public Affairs and a Master of Science in environmental science from Indiana University's School of Public and Environmental Affairs. He received a Bachelor of Science from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign for biology and economics.

Toni-Marie Higgins

Chief of Staff
Office of U.S. Sen. John Boozman



Toni-Marie Higgins has served as chief of staff to U.S. Sen. John Boozman for four years. Before this role, she served as legislative director, where she oversaw the senator's work on the Senate Appropriations Committee and foreign policy and trade issues. Before joining the Office of Sen. Boozman in 2007, she worked for Congresswoman Sue Kelly. Toni-Marie is originally from Northern New Jersey and graduated from the University of Maryland, where she double-majored in government & politics and criminology and criminal justice. She lives in Kensington, Maryland, with her husband and two children.

Kendra Isaacson

Senior Pensions Counsel

Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions



Kendra Kosko Isaacson serves as senior pensions counsel to the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP), where she advises Chair Patty Murray and other committee members on the Employment Retirement Income Security Act and all retirement-related issues. She is also a member of the committee's oversight team, where she assists with nominations and financial conflicts of interest. She also advises Sen. Murray on all tax-related matters.

Kendra received her Bachelor of Arts in government from Dartmouth College, a J.D. with honors from the Catholic University Columbus School of Law, and an LL.M in taxation with a certificate in employee benefits from the Georgetown University Law Center. After law school, Kendra was an Associate with Slevin & Hart, P.C. and Venable LLP in Washington, D.C. Before joining the HELP Committee, Kendra worked in the Employee Benefits Security Administration at the Department of Labor, where she worked in the Office of Policy and Research.

Solomon Jennings

Senior Program Manager, House Wounded Warrior Fellowship Program

Office of the Chief Administrative Officer of the House of Representatives



Solomon "Sol" Jennings IV serves as the senior program manager for the House Wounded Warrior Fellowship Program, Office of the Chief Administrative Officer, U.S. House of Representatives. Mr. Jennings joined the Wounded Warrior Fellowship Program in March 2016, bringing years of recruiting, retention, and program management experience to his position.

Mr. Jennings is a retired Marine staff sergeant and veteran of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom. He served as an infantryman, personal security detachment platoon sergeant, and retention specialist during his career.

Mr. Jennings is from Los Angeles, California, and earned his undergraduate degree in business from the University of Phoenix and his master's degree in public administration from Norwich University. Mr. Jennings lives with his wife and children in Upper Marlboro, Maryland.

Jeffrey Jezierski

Legislative Director

Office of U.S. Sen. Shelley Moore Capito



J.T. Jezierski is a native of Weirton, West Virginia, and a graduate of Wheeling University. He previously worked for U.S. Reps. David McKinley and Evan Jenkins. He served in the Bush administration at the White House Office of Presidential Personnel and at NASA. J.T. also worked on Mitt Romney's 2008 and 2012 campaigns. He has a master's degree from Regent University.

Vivian Moeglein

Staff Director

House Committee on Natural Resources



Vivian Moeglein serves as the Republican staff director of the House Committee on Natural Resources. She previously served as chief of staff for Rep. Bruce Westerman. Ms. Moeglein spent nearly a decade as a senior policy advisor for the American Council of Engineering Companies, focusing on infrastructure, surface transportation, aviation, and rail policy. She began her career with Congressman Asa Hutchinson and Congressman John Boozman. Vivian lives in Maryland with her husband and two children who play ice hockey and love the Washington Capitals.

Dianne Nellor

Clerk/Subcommittee Staff Director

Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies

Senate Committee on Appropriations



Since 2003, Dianne has served on the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies and was named clerk in August 2018. Dianne is responsible for every facet of budget and program execution for the Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). As clerk, she is responsible for crafting the yearly appropriations bill, budget strategies, providing recommendations to the chairman and full Senate Committee on Appropriations, and ensuring all Democrat priorities are maintained in the annual appropriations bill. Dianne specializes in USDA nutrition programs, foreign food aid, and the FDA. Dianne is a native of Utah and has another full-time job raising two sons.

Ven Neralla

Chief of Staff

Office of U.S. Rep. Andy Levin



Ven Neralla serves as chief of staff to Congressman Andy Levin. He previously served on the staff of three other members of Congress - Congresswoman Pramila Jayapal, Congresswoman Barbara Lee, and Congressman Peter A. DeFazio. Ven also served for eight years as a political appointee in the administration of President Barack Obama, as senior advisor for House Appropriations and Global Health at the U.S. Agency for International Development, and in a dual role as director of congressional affairs for the Research, Education, and Economics bureau and the National Institute for Food and Agriculture at the Department of Agriculture.

For two and a half years at the beginning of the Obama administration, Ven handled congressional affairs in the White House Office of Presidential Personnel as a director of priority placement. Before joining the White House, Ven was associate director for congressional affairs at the Millennium Change Corporation, a small, federal foreign aid agency. Before the Hill, Ven worked with the multilateral community at the United Nations Association-Canada on food insecurity issues and an international non-governmental organization following trade and economic policy in Asia, focusing on the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation.

Born in Honolulu, Hawaii, to parents of South Indian origin, Ven spent several formative years in Canada, graduating from McGill University in Montreal, Quebec. Ven's favorite form of escape is at the movies.

Jason Potter

Professional Staff Member

Senate Committee on Armed Services



Since 2015, Mr. Potter has served as a professional staff member on the Senate Armed Services Committee. His portfolio includes oversight of Department of Defense acquisition policy, Navy programs, and other Navy and maritime matters.

Before joining the committee, Mr. Potter served as a program analyst on the Navy Staff (OPNAV) for four years. He began his civil service career as a force structure analyst in the Naval Warfare Integration Group (OPNAV N00X). He next served as a special assistant to the Chief of Naval Operations (OPNAV N00Z), where he developed congressional testimony materials and led special projects. His final OPNAV position was as a section head in the programming division (OPNAV N80) responsible for budget communication materials and special projects.

Mr. Potter served as a naval officer on active duty for six years. At sea, he served as navigator aboard USS CAPE ST. GEORGE (CG-71) and the communications and repair officer aboard USS RUSHMORE (LSD-47). He deployed twice to the Arabian Gulf to support Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom. He completed an Individual Augmentation assignment supporting Joint Special Operations Task Force - Philippines (JSOTF-P). Ashore, he served as an analyst in the 2010 Navy Quadrennial Defense Review Integration Group (Navy QDR) on the Navy staff.

Mr. Potter is a drilling surface warfare officer in the U.S. Navy Reserve. In 2015, he completed a reserve deployment to Bahrain in support of Commander, U.S. Naval Forces Central Command. Mr. Potter earned an executive MBA with distinction from the Naval Postgraduate School in 2013, an M.A. in government from the University of Maryland in 2005, and a B.S. with distinction in political science from the U.S. Naval Academy in 2004.

Jamie Robinette

Executive Director/Legislative Director

The Suburban Caucus

Office of U.S. Rep. Ann Wagner



Jamie Robinette has worked in the U.S. House of Representatives for over 20 years in several capacities. She started her career with Congressman John Culberson and served as his chief of staff for almost nine years. She then served as chief of staff to Congressman Ross Spano. Most recently, she was named the executive director of the Suburban Caucus under Congresswoman Ann Wagner. The caucus's mission is to advance a federal policy agenda that positively affects the everyday lives of suburban America.

Jamie is a life-long Virginian and received her degree in political science from Mary Washington College in Fredericksburg, Virginia. In 2013, she received a master's degree in legislative affairs from The George Washington University. She lives in Virginia with her husband and 12-year-old daughter.

Moh Sharma

Policy Advisor and Director of Member Services and Outreach
House Committee on the Judiciary



Moh Sharma is currently the director of member services and outreach and a policy advisor for the House Judiciary Committee under Chair Jerrold Nadler. She was previously a senior policy advisor and the director of outreach and member services for the Committee on Small Business in the U.S. House of Representatives under Ranking Member Nydia Velázquez, a senior policy advisor for the House Democratic Caucus, and a legislative aide for the Office of Congresswoman Judy Chu and the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus.

She is on the Congressional Asian Pacific American Staff Association's advisory board and serves as the Asian Pacific American Institute for Congressional Studies Alumni Association chair, Congressional South Asian American Staff Association vice president, and holds a few other volunteer board positions. Moh received her B.A. (Hons.) and an M.A. in economics from the University of Connecticut, an M.S. in global affairs from New York University, and a J.D. from City University of New York School of Law.

Kevin Spicer

Deputy Chief of Staff/Communications Director
Office of U.S. Rep. Frank J. Mrvan



Kevin Spicer is a native of Northwest Indiana. He serves as the deputy chief of staff/communications director for Congressman Frank J. Mrvan. Previously, Kevin worked for Congressman Peter J. Visclosky from 2005 to 2020, focusing on the congressman's work on the House Appropriations Committee, including the Defense and Energy and Water Subcommittees and the Congressional Steel Caucus. Before the Hill, Kevin was a Peace Corps Volunteer in Mauritania, working on small enterprise development and micro-finance projects. He graduated from Indiana University with degrees in economics and cognitive science and has a Master of Public Policy degree from Georgetown's McCourt School of Public Policy. Hobby interests include playing classical guitar and birding.

Aaron Suntag

Senior Policy Advisor
Office of U.S. Sen. Debbie Stabenow



Aaron Suntag serves as senior policy advisor to U.S. Sen. Debbie Stabenow. In this capacity, he advises the senator on energy, environmental and automotive policies, including those that come before her as a member of the Energy and Natural Resources and Finance Committees. From 2010 to 2014, he served as a legislative assistant for U.S. Sen. Kay Hagan. In the preceding nine years, he worked on energy, environmental, tax, and natural resource issues for a Washington, D.C., consulting firm. Suntag has B.A. in political science from Boston University and attended John Hopkins University for a dual M.A. in business administration and government.

Tom Tucker

Director of Operations

House Committee on Appropriations



Tom has worked as a congressional staffer in the U.S. House of Representatives for 24 years. The last four have been with the Committee on Appropriations. He has also worked for former U.S. Reps. Sam Farr and Jimmy Panetta, representing California's 20th Congressional District. Mr. Tucker has lived in the Washington, D.C., area for the last 25 years but grew up in Monterey County, California (part of CA-20). Tom graduated from the University of California, Santa Barbara with a bachelor's degree in political science. Tom currently lives in Tacoma Park, Maryland, with his wife, Chris, and two sons, Ethan and Nicholas. Tom is a fan of golfing, skiing, and rock climbing.

Morgan Ulmer

Clerk

Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies

Senate Committee on Appropriations



Morgan joined the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies in July 2019. As clerk, she is responsible for budget and program execution for the Department of Agriculture, Food and Drug Administration, and the Farm Credit Administration. Before her time with the committee, she worked in the Office of U.S. Sen. Richard Shelby, where she worked on his policy team and served as legislative director. Morgan is a graduate of the University of Mississippi. She and her husband, Daniel, reside in Washington, D.C.



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