



David Cleary, Principal

As a Principal with theGROUP, David develops and executes results-based public policy strategies designed to assist clients in achieving their business, policy, and political goals. His work includes advising clients on the evolving legislative and regulatory environment to maximize their abilities to leverage opportunities and mitigate risk.

Prior to joining theGROUP, David served as a Senior Policy Advisor at another top D.C. government relations practice, advising senior executives across multiple industries including life sciences, health care, higher education, and energy sectors.

During his career in the U.S. Congress, David cultivated an impressive record of success in working across the aisle to reach consensus and get results. As the longest serving Republican Staff Director of the Senate's Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee, he led a dynamic team that obtained significant bipartisan legislative victories for former Senators Lamar Alexander (R-TN) and Richard Burr (R-NC). David played a central role in securing key legislative accomplishments including passage of the Every Student Succeeds Act and the 21st Century Cures Act. He also oversaw work on FDA user fee reauthorizations, mental health bills, higher education legislation to reduce interest rates on student loans and provide permanent funding for HBCUs, as well as legislation to address the opioid epidemic, and reauthorizations of the nation's other education and workforce training programs.

David also simultaneously served as Chief of Staff to Senator Lamar Alexander, overseeing his legislative portfolio, general operations, fundraising, and political efforts. In this role, David helped lead efforts to pass the Music Modernization Act, the Great American Outdoors Act, and the Commercial Flight Courtesy Act which banned cell phones on planes. He also worked to streamline the executive nomination process that Senator Alexander and Senator Chuck Schumer (D-NY) spearheaded. In addition, David oversaw the Energy and Water Appropriations Subcommittee team Senator Alexander chaired, where they focused on increasing funding for the Department of Energy's Office of Science, supercomputing programs, and improving the nation's navigable ports and waterways.

Prior to joining the U.S. Senate, David was a Professional Staff Member for the U.S. House of Representatives Education and Workforce Committee, where he was the lead policy staffer for former Congressman John Boehner (R-OH), Chairman, and led the bipartisan reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004.

David started his career at the U.S. Department of Education where he worked in the Budget Office and the Office of Legislation and Congressional Affairs.

Originally from Bloomington, Minnesota, David moved to the nation's capital to obtain a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science and a Master of Public Administration degree, both from The George Washington University.

David lives in Arlington, Virginia with his wife and daughter.