

Tom O'Donnell

Co-Founder and Managing Partner, Gephardt Government Affairs



Tom O'Donnell served as chief of staff to House Democratic Leader Richard Gephardt for eight years, bringing successful resolution to numerous national, political and legislative battles. O'Donnell acted as Gephardt's chief strategist and field general for, among other landmark fiscal and budgetary pieces of legislation, the Budget Summit Agreement of 1990 and the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1993. O'Donnell brings policy expertise spanning three decades and has played pivotal roles in negotiating with the Clinton White House, Senate, Administration and key industry stakeholders.

O'Donnell's strengths in issue management and advocacy campaigns have resulted in some of the most dramatic victories in municipal, state and federal elections. O'Donnell most recently helped turn key battleground states to blue in the 2006 shift to Democratic majority, including former House member Senator Sherrod Brown of Ohio's defeat of a two-term incumbent. From 1997 to 2007, O'Donnell served as a partner at Doak, Carrier, O'Donnell and Goldman (DCO), a leading

political consulting media firm, where he developed messages for key constituencies and directed broadcast media blitzes to produce wins including California Governor Gray Davis in 1998 and 2002 and current DCCC Chair Chris Van Hollen's first election to his seat in 2002. O'Donnell also directed message in a hotly-contested run off to help Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa become the city's first Latino mayor since 1872.

In 2007, O'Donnell co-founded Gephardt Government Affairs and now serves as the firm's Managing Partner. In his current role, O'Donnell represents *Fortune 500* clients on Capitol Hill and the Administration on issues including climate change and energy, financial services, healthcare, trade, tax and intellectual property protection and enforcement. He also directs clients in their outreach to organized labor in various issue coalitions based on his longtime experience liaising with labor, including examples dating back to the 1995 minimum wage battle.

Prior to his tenure as Gephardt's chief of staff, O'Donnell helped shape and promote the national policy agenda, including in his roles as the Issues Director and the Deputy Director of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee (DCCC). O'Donnell began his career in Washington in 1976 as part of Democratic efforts to reform the legislative structures of both chambers, first at Senator John Culver (D-IA)'s Commission on Administrative and Legislative Reform and Congressman David Obey (D-WI)'s House-side Commission. From 1989-1997, O'Donnell served as Gephardt's chief of staff.

In the course of his public service, O'Donnell has been touted as a "star consultant" by the *Washington Post* and was recognized each year by *Roll Call* during his tenure as Gephardt's chief of staff. He is regularly cited in *Politics: Campaigns and Elections'* "best of" rankings. Currently O'Donnell serves as one of *National Journal* magazine's Top 100 "Political Insiders" surveyed weekly on newsworthy political and public policy issues. *The Hill's* 2009 Top Lobbyists: Hired Guns commented, "The former chief of staff to House Democratic Leader Dick Gephardt (Mo.), O'Donnell is a key cog in his burgeoning lobbying business." (Business & Lobbying, Top Lobbyists: Hired Guns, *The Hill*, May 14, 2009)

O'Donnell earned a doctorate in Philosophy in from American University while working concurrently in the House of Representatives, and a bachelor's degree in Political Science from SUNY Brockport, NY. Tom is a member of the Board of Trustees at Claremont Graduate University. He has also served as a professor of quantitative methods at Georgetown University's Public Policy Institute and has been a featured speaker at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government, Duke University and University of California at Berkeley. A Brooklyn native, O'Donnell is married to Caroline Fawcett and has three children.

Contact: contact@gephardtgroup.com