



HELEN TOLAR
Principal

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Past RAMS Head

Republicans Associated for Mutual Support

Senior Fellow

John C. Stennis Center for
Public Service Leadership

Education

Converse College, B.A.
University of South Carolina School of Law, J.D.

Helen Tolar is an attorney and Republican strategist with nearly two decades of experience in key roles on both sides of the Capitol dome and beyond the Beltway. As Principal with Mehlman Castagnetti Rosen & Thomas, Tolar puts to work her extensive network of relationships on Capitol Hill and around Washington to achieve results for clients.

Prior to joining Mehlman Castagnetti, Tolar served in high-level positions on the Hill and in the private sector, including key roles in the Senate and House. As Chief of Staff to Sen. John Boozman (R-AR), a former health care provider and senior member of the Appropriations, Agriculture, Veterans' Affairs, and Environment and Public Works Committees, she managed Boozman's staff across eight offices and coordinated with a political team during the senator's historic re-election bid, while working with external partners across business and government to advance Boozman's priorities. During her time with the senator, she headed "RAMS," a 60-year-old membership organization of Republican Senate and House chiefs of staff.

Tolar also served as Staff Director and Chief Counsel for the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs, a role in which she reached across the political aisle and worked with key stakeholder organizations. She played a leading role in crafting six bills that ultimately became laws aimed at enhancing veterans' access to quality health care, education and employment opportunities, and at modernizing the VA benefits process. Her efforts led National Journal to name her one of "Fourteen Powerful Women on the Hill" in its quadrennial "Hill People" profile of key congressional staffers.

Tolar's policy experience ranges beyond Capitol Hill and the Beltway. She served as the Director of Public Policy for South Carolina's largest trade association. In addition, she was a government affairs consultant to BlueCross BlueShield of South Carolina prior to and following enactment of the Affordable Care Act. Before joining Mehlman Castagnetti, she was a Principal in the federal government affairs office of an AmLaw 100 firm, representing corporate, trade association and higher education clients.

Earlier in her career, Tolar served as health policy counsel at the Senate VA Committee and in various roles including as Legislative Director for then-Rep. Jeff Miller (R-FL), where her efforts on behalf of the military and veteran communities drew recognition by multiple advocacy organizations. She began her Capitol Hill career as a law clerk at the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee under subcommittee chair and then-Vice Chair of the House Republican Conference, the late Rep. Tillie Fowler (R-FL).