



NICHOLE DISTEFANO
Principal

Education

University of the Pacific-McGeorge
School of Law, J.D.
University of San Diego, B.A.

Nichole Distefano is an attorney and policy professional with over 12 years of legislative and political expertise, serving both on Capitol Hill and in the Administration. A Democratic strategist with a diverse background and policy expertise, Nichole has a deep understanding of the legislative and executive branches that few can match. She's a known pragmatist with a reputation for working through tough issues and achieving results.

Prior to joining Mehlman Castagnetti, Nichole served as legislative director for United States Senator Claire McCaskill, where she supervised a policy team of highly qualified policy staff and served as the Senator's strategic policy advisor during a highly polarized election cycle.

This was Nichole's second opportunity to work with the office of Senator McCaskill. From January 2007 until June of 2013, she served as Senator McCaskill's legislative counsel on a wide range of issues, including energy and environment, agriculture, government oversight and accountability, and domestic security matters.

Prior to returning to the United States Senate, Nichole spent over three years as a political appointee in the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Office of Congressional and Intergovernmental Relations, serving as the Deputy Associate Administrator for the Office of Congressional Relations and then as the Associate Administrator for the Office of Congressional and Intergovernmental Relations. She managed EPA's interactions with Congress and the White House and served as Administrator Gina McCarthy's strategic and political advisor on congressional and state matters, including: leading cabinet-level Senate confirmations, serving as one of the agency's lead negotiators in the passage of the Frank R. Lautenberg Chemical Safety for the 21st Century Act, helping in the agency's efforts to launch the Clean Water Rule, the Clean Power Plan, National Ambient Air Quality Standards for Ozone, and other policy matters. She also served as a strategic advisor in several high-profile oversight matters, including the discovery of lead contamination in Flint, Michigan's drinking water, and supervised dozens of experienced career professionals in their interactions with congress and state and local governments.

Throughout her time in the United States Senate and in the Obama Administration, Nichole was known as a fair but tough negotiator who was willing to work across the political spectrum to advance policy priorities throughout the legislative process.

Before leaving her home state of Missouri for the halls of the United States Senate, Nichole was the rural outreach director for Senator McCaskill's 2006 Senate campaign and worked as an attorney in Kansas City, Missouri.