



Paul F. Welday
Senior Counsel

Paul F. Welday has an extensive background in broad range of federal issues including international trade, taxation, transportation, health care, education, environmental, intergovernmental affairs and appropriations issues. In 2011, he joined Watts Partners, a leading Washington, D.C. based government affairs consulting firm as Senior Counsel to the firm.

He was formerly partner and co-founder of companion government affairs consulting firms Strategic Federal Affairs and Strategic Public Affairs. Additionally, Mr. Welday is the President of Renaissance Strategies, Inc., a leading public affairs consulting firm and Superior Capitol Consulting, LLC, a state government affairs firm based in Lansing, Michigan.

In January 1993, Mr. Welday began serving as Chief of Staff for Republican U.S. Representative Joseph K. Knollenberg from Michigan's Eleventh Congressional District. Yet his active involvement in professional and public affairs span the course of the past three decades. Since the early 1980's, he has been a leader in government, politics and business throughout the Midwest.

A 1981 graduate of James Madison College at Michigan State University with a B.A. degree in Justice, Morality, and Constitutional Democracy, Mr. Welday began his professional career as a legislative assistant in Washington, D.C. to U.S. Representative Jack F. Kemp (R-NY) where he focused on the early stages of enterprise zone legislation. Upon returning to Michigan, he worked for State Representative Wilbur Brotherton of Farmington. As an undergraduate Mr. Welday was honored as the 1981 "Outstanding Legislative Intern" in Michigan.

Mr. Welday began his political activism as a college student at James Madison College at Michigan State University. In 1982, he began his political career as a state-wide organizer for gubernatorial candidate Richard Headlee. Shortly thereafter, Welday began his first working relationship with Joe Knollenberg, who served at that time as Chairman of the Republican Committee of Oakland County, Michigan. Welday went on to serve as Executive Director of the organization under Knollenberg's chairmanship until 1985.

In 1985, Welday formed The Welday Group Inc., a public affairs and public relations consulting firm in Farmington Hills, Michigan. He remained very active on the civic and political scene serving as campaign manager for Oakland County Executive Daniel Murphy and as Deputy Director of the Jack Kemp for President Campaign in Michigan during the 1987-88 election cycle. On the local level, he served as a member of the Farmington Hills Michigan Planning Commission during this same period.

In the late 1980's, Mr. Welday moved west where he served as Chief of Staff to Mayor P.J. Morgan of Omaha, Nebraska. In this capacity, he served as the primary advisor and chief operating officer of America's 48th-largest municipality in a non-partisan, strong-mayor form of government.

In 1992, Mr. Welday left Omaha's city hall and returned to the national political scene working as campaign manager for U.S. Senator Robert W. Kasten, Jr. of Wisconsin and as senior consultant to other GOP candidates, including businessman Joe Knollenberg.

Shortly after his first election to Congress, Mr. Knollenberg asked Mr. Welday to serve as his Chief of Staff. Mr. Welday went on to manage both the Capitol Hill and Michigan district offices of Congressman Knollenberg since the beginning of the first term. Throughout his service to Congressman Knollenberg, Mr. Welday continued to live in Michigan remaining actively involved in community affairs.

After serving as campaign manager for the second of two Ronna Romney for US Senate campaigns in 1996, Mr. Welday served as Washington Partner and Vice President for Public Affairs at the firm of Market Strategies, a leading market research and political consulting firm with offices throughout the United States. In his practice, Mr. Welday concentrated on international business and political affairs with a focus on energy policy reform.

In late 1997, Congressman Knollenberg successfully appealed to Mr. Welday to return to his congressional office and he began his second tour of duty for the citizens of Michigan's Eleventh Congressional District. Due to reapportionment, Congressman Knollenberg went on to represent the Ninth Congressional District of Michigan. As Chief of Staff, Mr. Welday was instrumental in assisting Congressman Knollenberg in the formation of his legislative agenda and his constituent service operation. Moving quickly to become chair of the critical Transportation, Treasury, Housing and Urban Development Appropriations sub-committee of the House Appropriations Committee, Rep. Knollenberg relied on Mr. Welday to oversee his committee activity in addition to his duties as Chief of Staff.

In 2002, Mr. Welday left government service to launch his partnership business ventures, Strategic Federal Affairs and Strategic Public Affairs, and chair the successful re-election campaign of Congressman Knollenberg. Building a diverse consulting practice that combines the expertise of marketing, communications, political and public affairs, Mr. Welday's professional work focuses on aviation, transportation, health care, technology, manufacturing, higher education and intergovernmental policy issues. With a business model that combines Midwestern values with extensive government experience, Mr. Welday developed a client-focused organization with a strong Michigan focus.

Among Mr. Welday's federal clients included Northwest Airlines, Automation Alley, Altair Engineering, Wayne County (MI), Walsh College, Lawrence Technological University, Henry Ford Health Systems, Schoolcraft College, POM Group, Oakwood Health Systems and others.

In December of 2002, Mr. Welday was elected Chairman of the Oakland County (MI) Republican Party where he succeeded Oakland County Executive L. Brooks Patterson in this key leadership role. As Chairman of the Oakland County, he is credited with having strengthened the organization and raised the most funds of any two-year election cycle for the county GOP. He was the Republican nominee for the Michigan House of Representatives in 2008 and a leading candidate for Congress in Ninth Congressional District in 2010.

A virtual lifelong resident of the Farmington, Michigan area, Mr. Welday is father of two children, Nicholas and Natalie. He is married to Valerie Knol who recently concluded a term as Mayor, and currently serves as a Councilmember for the City of Farmington. He is former member of the Farmington Hills Planning Commission and is a member of the Farmington/Farmington Hills Chamber of Commerce. He is a member of the Farmington Xemplar Club and has served on the Boards of the Oakland Literacy Council and the Child Abuse and Neglect Council of Oakland County.