



Melissa Kuipers Blake

Shareholder

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Denver, Colorado

Dubbed "The Negotiator" by *ColoradoBiz Magazine*, Melissa Kuipers Blake is a leading lobbyist and seasoned political strategist with more than 18 years of national legislative experience. Melissa leads negotiations for her clients between members of the Colorado Senate, House of Representatives and Governor and is known for her issue knowledge, political strategy development and campaign fundraising prowess. When it comes to behind the scenes negotiations and issue development, Melissa is second to none. Melissa also serves as chair of the firm's Emerging Regulated Industries (ERI) practice group which assists state and local governments and employers throughout the country as they navigate the complex world of medical and recreational marijuana legalization. Having worked in Colorado politics since day one of recreational marijuana legalization, Melissa has a unique perspective on the industry and regularly shares that expertise with those entities impacted by marijuana from a statutory, regulatory, compliance and workplace perspective.

At the core of Melissa's government relations practice is her reputation for integrity, honesty and professionalism. Melissa is a close and trusted confidante to a number of key members of the House and Senate, as well as several statewide elected officials. She can often be found in the war rooms of multiple campaigns and has helped influence the outcome of many elections through her advice and strategy development. While Melissa's influence in the halls of the Colorado Capitol is extensive, she also maintains significant federal relationships on Capitol Hill with several U.S. senators and members of the House of Representatives from all parts of the country.

Melissa regularly provides commentary to state and local media on a variety of legislative issues and is often tapped to speak at state and national conferences to share her political and legislative endeavors. She is widely recognized by local and national media for her government relations successes, including being named one of the *Denver Business Journal's* "Top Forty under 40" at the age of 29, being named a Rising Star in *5280 Magazine's* 2014 list of the most powerful people in Denver, being picked as a Top 25 Young Professional by *ColoradoBiz Magazine* in 2015 and, most recently, being named a Top Lawyer in Government Relations/Lobbying in *5280 Magazine's* 2016 and 2017 Top Lawyer's List.

Prior to joining Brownstein, Melissa was the vice president of Government Relations and Communications for the Colorado Automobile Dealers Association, where she represented 270 new franchised auto dealers in Colorado. Prior to her work with the automobile industry, Melissa served as the legislative director for the Colorado Trial Lawyers Association, was a legislative aide in the Florida Senate and worked for several years in the Florida Legislature for the Rubin Group, based in Ft. Lauderdale.

In her own time, Melissa serves as the CEO of Baking for the Troops, a Colorado-based non-profit which prepares and sends homemade care packages of baked goods to members of the U.S. military deployed throughout the world. Since Melissa founded the organization in 2009, she and her team of volunteers have sent more than 2,000 boxes of cards and baked goods to military personnel in countless regions of the globe, including Afghanistan and Iraq.

Melissa is licensed to practice law in Colorado, Florida and Washington, D.C.

Practices

Government Relations, Emerging Regulated Industries, Political Law, State & Local Legislation & Policy

Representative Matters

- Crafted and passed legislation on behalf of DealerTrack Processing Services to authorize the Colorado Department of Motor Vehicles to implement an electronic lien and titling process as well as an electronic temporary tags and vehicle registration process. Organized a broad coalition of stakeholders including the Department of Motor Vehicles, County Clerks Association and new and used car dealers in order to pass and implement this expansive legislation.
- Established a first-of-its-kind loan guarantee and rebate program for the Colorado Movie and Television Industry in order to attract entertainment productions to Colorado. Recently secured \$5.3M in state funding for the rebate program which resulted in Quentin Tarantino choosing Telluride, Colorado as the location for directing his 8th feature film, *The Hateful Eight*.
- Selected by the Colorado Republican Committee Chairman to serve as General Counsel to the Denver 2016 Host Committee in Denver's effort to secure the Republican National Convention in 2016.

News & Events

- Casinos and Marijuana: Gaming Legislators Conference
- Brownstein Announces Eight New Shareholder and Attorney Promotions
- Twenty-seven Brownstein attorneys were included in 5280's Top Lawyers List
- Promotions, Games and Campaigns – Compliance, Rules and Ethics
- The Morning After Marijuana Legalization: Now What?
- 8 states consider legalizing pot, Denver firm is poised to help
- Brownstein Announces Launch of Emerging Regulated Industries Practice Group
- Melissa Kuipers and Sarah Clark Comment on Legislative Session Wins and Losses in Law Week Colorado
- Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck Recognized for its Top Lobbying Presence in Colorado
- Brownstein Attorneys Included on 5280 Magazine's 2016 Top Lawyers List
- Melissa Kuipers Named One of ColoradoBIZ Magazine's 2015 Top 25 Young Professionals
- Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck Announces Five New Shareholders, Other Attorney Promotions
- Melissa Kuipers Named as Rising Star in 5280's "Most Powerful People in Denver"
- Day at the Capitol-Colorado Film Incentives
- Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck Honored with the Colorado Lawyers Committee Law Firm Of The Year Award
- Melissa Kuipers Appointed to the Colorado Business Committee for the Arts Board of Directors
- 2012 RNC Colorado Convention Committee Preps For Packed Week Of Events
- Chair Melissa Kuipers Solidifies Members of 2012 RNC Colorado Convention Committee
- Melissa Kuipers of Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck Named Chair of 2012 RNC Colorado Convention Committee
- Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck's Government Relations Team Brings New Talent Aboard

Community

Board of Directors, Colorado Civil Justice League, 2010 – present

Founder, Baking for the Troops, 2009 – present

Founder, Lunch with Our Leaders, University of Miami School of Law, 2004 – 2005

Publications & Presentations

- States Diverge on Employment Law Protections for Medical Marijuana Users, *Brownstein Client Alert*, July 31, 2017
- The Challenges of Legalizing Marijuana, Panelist, Conference of State Majority Leaders, July 22, 2017
- Casinos & Marijuana: Legal & Policy Issues, Panelist, National Council of Legislators from Gaming States, June 9, 2017
- Casinos and Marijuana: Legal and Policy Issues, Speaker, National Council of Legislators from Gaming States Summer Meeting, June 9, 2017
- Featured Topics: CFPB & Dodd-Frank and Business Challenges Related to Marijuana Legalization, Speaker, Leading Builders of America General Counsels Meeting, May 11, 2017
- Urban Renewal Applicability Bill Provides Certainty to Urban Renewal Community; Plus Two Other Urban Renewal Bills, Co-author, *Brownstein Client Alert*, April 3, 2017
- Amendment 2 Passed in Nevada, What's Next?, Presenter of CLE, Caesars Entertainment Corporation, February 7, 2017
- Marijuana in the Workplace, Presenter of CLE, UNLV William S. Boyd School of Law, December 13, 2016
- Prepare Your Business For Legal Marijuana, Co-Author, *Vegas Inc.*, December 5, 2016
- 8 States Have Legalized Marijuana In 8 Different Ways, Co-Author *Law360*, November 22, 2016

Education

- J.D., 2005, University of Miami School of Law
- B.S., 2002, with honors, Florida State University

Admissions

- Colorado
- Florida
- District of Columbia, 2012

Recognition

5280 Top Lawyers, Government Relations, 2016-2017
Top 25 Young Professional, *Colorado Biz Magazine*, 2015
Most Powerful People, Rising Star, *5280 Magazine*
Private Sector Co-Chair, American Legislative Exchange Council, 2013 – present
Colorado Convention Chair, 2012 Republican National Convention
Top 40 under 40, *Denver Business Journal*, 2010
University of Miami School of Law Alumni Spotlight, 2010
Editor in Chief, *University of Miami School of Law Res Ipsa Loquitur*

Membership

Government and Public Policy Advocacy Committee, The Florida Bar, 2017-2018
Cabinet, Denver Film Society, 2011 – present
National Association of Dealer Counsel, 2009 – present
American Bar Association. 2011 – present
Colorado Association of Commerce and Industry, Government Affairs Council, 2008 – present
Florida Bar Association, 2006 – present
Colorado Women's Bar Association, 2011 – present