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Practice Areas

*Climate Change, Clean Technology, &
Renewable Energy
Government Relations & Public Policy*

Education

B.A., University of Oregon, 1987

Ben L. McMakin

*Principal, Managing Director, Governmental Issues**

Ben McMakin served for almost two decades on Capitol Hill as a senior political and legislative advisor to Members of Congress from the Pacific Northwest. As chair of Van Ness Feldman's Public Policy practice, Mr. McMakin uses his comprehensive knowledge of Congress and the legislative process to advance client interests on an array of issues including clean tech, energy, biofuels, appropriations, transportation, defense and homeland security, and technology. Mr. McMakin's clients include venture capitalists, startups, technology providers, utilities, and manufacturers.

Professional Background

Prior to joining Van Ness Feldman in 2005, Mr. McMakin served as the Legislative Director for Senator Patty Murray (D-WA), the senior Senator from Washington state and a member of the Senate Democratic leadership team. In this position, Mr. McMakin developed and implemented the Senator's legislative agenda, including her work at Senate Appropriations Committee.

Over his 17 year Capitol Hill career, Mr. McMakin served as Legislative Director for Representative/Senator Ron Wyden (D-OR) and as Legislative Director for Representative Mike Kopetski (D-OR). Ben's experience included extensive work with Members who served on key Congressional committee including the Appropriations Committee in the Senate and the Ways and Means Committee and Energy and Commerce Committee in the House of Representatives.

Government Service

- Legislative Assistant/Legislative Director, Senator Patty Murray (D-WA), U.S. Senate, 1996-2005
- Legislative Director, Representative Ron Wyden (D-OR), U.S. House of Representatives, 1995-1996
- Legislative Director, Representative Mike Kopetski (D-OR), U.S. House of Representatives, 1990-1994
- Staff Assistant, Senator Alan Cranston (D-CA), U.S. Senate 1988-1989

* Non-Attorney Professional