

**Verrill**

## Michael V. Saxl

Counsel

[msaxl@mainestreetolutions.com](mailto:msaxl@mainestreetolutions.com)



Mike joined Verrill following his service as Speaker of the House in the 120th Maine Legislature (2000-2002). While representing his Portland district, Mike pursued a variety of initiatives, from seeking increased access to affordable health care to championing tax credits aimed at creating new educational opportunities.

Prior to serving as Speaker, Mike served as Majority Leader (1998-2000) and Majority Whip (1996-1998). As a legislator, he worked on diverse issues ranging from health care and higher education to tax reform and domestic violence. When Maine's term limit law precluded him from returning to the State House, it was only natural for Mike to seek out new avenues to continue to pursue his passion for public policy and politics.

At Verrill, Mike is using his public policy experience to provide a cutting-edge combination of services to clients under the aegis of Maine Street Solutions, the firm's strategic consulting group. This venture provides the firm with a variety of capabilities including traditional legislative advocacy, public relations, grass-tops and grassroots advocacy, and campaign management. Mike helps numerous clients navigate the public arena through his ability to provide multilateral strategic advice and planning.

This mix of services has been largely unavailable from a single firm in the state of Maine. Mike believes that clients can utilize Maine's relatively small size to their advantage—a concept he calls the "small state phenomenon." According to Mike, anything is possible in a small state because of the ease with which messages can be disseminated among critical audiences.

Mike has particular interest in the ways in which citizens can inform the public debate on issues and make a difference in fashioning policy. Grassroots efforts, of course, can often be used to great advantage in moving an initiative forward. However, Mike also relies on the use of what he terms "grasstops" advocacy, in which influential members of the community are called upon to shape opinion through peer-to-peer communications.

By combining advocacy, strategic communications, and campaign management

### Services/Industries

- Government & Public Relations
- Energy
- Telecommunications
- Public & Government Relations —Energy
- Higher Education
- Food & Beverage
- Manufacturing Food & Beverage
- Retail Food & Beverage

services with a full-service law firm, Mike provides a more holistic, multilateral approach to resolving his clients' problems. By merging public policy experience with traditional legal practice, Maine Street Solutions provides clients with the best chance to achieve their goals.

## **Education**

- University of Maine School of Law (J.D., *cum laude*)
- Bowdoin College (A.B.)

## **Public Service**

- Holocaust Human Rights Center, Board Member
- Western Mountain Foundation, Board Member
- Maine Equal Justice Partners, Board Member

## **Bar Admissions**

- Maine

## **Memberships**

- ABA President's Commission on Loan Repayment (2001-2003)

## **Honors**

- Received Katahdin Counsel Recognition for *pro bono* efforts (2019)
- Recognized by Best Lawyers® as the 2013 and 2020 Augusta, Maine, Government Relations Practice Lawyer of the Year
- Listed in *The Best Lawyers in America*© Government Relations Practice

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