

Steptoe Adds Hill Veteran George Callas to Government Affairs and Tax Practices

George Callas, who served as senior tax counsel to Speaker of the House Paul Ryan and was one of the chief architects of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act (TCJA), has joined the **Steptoe & Johnson LLP**'s Government Affairs & Public Policy and Tax Groups. He will serve as a managing director in Steptoe's Washington office.

Callas is a 15-year Capitol Hill veteran who spent most of that time working on tax issues at the committee level and for Republican leadership. As senior tax counsel to Ryan since 2015, Callas worked as lead staff negotiator for House Republicans on the three major tax packages that were enacted into law during Ryan's tenure. Along with the TCJA, which Ryan personally thanked him for shepherding upon signing the legislation in December 2017, Callas led the charge on the Protecting Americans against Tax Hikes Act of 2015 and the tax title of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018, the firm said in a release.

Previously, Callas served seven years on the House Committee on Ways and Means, including as chief tax counsel, where he worked closely with former Chairmen Dave Camp, Paul Ryan, and current Chairman Kevin Brady. In 2012, Roll Call recognized him as "One of Five Hill Aides to Know" in tax. During his tenure as chief tax counsel, Callas also worked on the revenue aspects of several pieces of trade legislation. Callas's Hill experience also includes time spent on the Senate side, serving as legislative director and senior advisor to Sen. George Voinovich, and a position as counsel to the House Budget Committee.

“George is one of the most influential tax staffers on the Hill,” said Steptoe Chair Phil West, who also leads the firm’s tax department. “Along with his strong technical tax skills, George has been recognized for his ability to translate the technical aspects of tax policy into concise and straightforward language that legislators, Treasury officials, and business executives understand. He will provide great value to clients, from large multinational corporations to trade associations, in navigating the new tax laws and the rulemakings that lie ahead.”

Micah Green and Scott Sinder, who co-lead the firm’s Government Affairs and Public Policy Group, added: “George’s experiences both technically and politically at the committee level and in the speaker’s office, have given him unique insights not only into how tax laws are negotiated and enacted, but also the intent of the Congress on virtually every section of the most significant tax reform legislation to pass Congress in over three decades. Such deep and recent experiences and insights will provide tax clients valuable perspective on tax regulatory, legislative, and planning strategies as this new law is implemented and continually reviewed.”

Callas remarked: “Since reaching a decision to leave the Hill, I’ve explored a number of opportunities with law, lobbying and accounting firms. Steptoe is the right fit. With a stellar tax practice and equally strong public policy shop, it is the combination of everything I was looking for to shape and grow a comprehensive tax policy and legislative practice.”

Callas earned his B.A. and his J.D., with honors, from the University of Florida, where he served as the senior managing editor for the Florida Journal of International Law. He also received an LL.M. in taxation from the University of Florida. Before transitioning to Capitol Hill, Callas spent several years at KPMG as a senior tax associate.

