

# **Blank Rome Government Relations Adds Six Professionals in D.C.**

Washington, D.C. – Blank Rome Government Relations LLC (“BRGR”) is pleased to welcome principals Don Norden, Katie Kachel, David Tennent, and Snjezana Arthur, as well as senior advisors Keith Hartwell and Richard Sherman, to the firm’s Washington, D.C., office. Norden, Kachel, Tennent, Hartwell, and Sherman joined on April 1 and Arthur will join by early June. The prominent group notably counsels clients in the transportation industry, particularly in the railroad and public transit sector, and joins BRGR from Chambers, Conlon & Hartwell, LLC.

Collectively, the team represents clients before the legislative and executive branches of the U.S. government. Leveraging prior experience gained on Capitol Hill, the team is well versed in legislative analysis, the appropriations process, regulatory review, and available grants for clients. As such, the group develops comprehensive government affairs strategies for clients, ranging from private corporations to municipalities, state governments, public agencies, and trade associations. In addition to helping clients navigate federal legislative and regulatory affairs, the team develops and implements grassroots lobbying strategies, such as organizing local media events and mobilizing citizen support for elected officials that are aligned with client interests.

With an emphasis on supporting clients in the transportation industry, the group is well known for working with railroad and public transit operators and trade associations and has well-established connections in Congress on related legislation and initiatives, especially with regards to reauthorization and infrastructure spending. Furthermore, the

team supports maritime clients with their government affairs needs. For example, Congress just recently passed the FY2021 National Defense Authorization Act, which includes maritime provisions for port infrastructure development grants—a competitive grant program that many island communities are watching closely. BRGR and Blank Rome will be following these developments closely on behalf of clients and helping them obtain these grants.

## About the Team

Norden has extensive experience in transportation, governmental finance, land use, labor law, and tax issues. His accomplishments include numerous legislative language and line-item amendments in Congress, as well as working with federal agencies on interpretive issues that avoided the need for congressional action. Throughout his career, Norden has successfully worked with both parties to reach bipartisan consensus among a wide range of varied interest groups to advance client objectives. Norden received his J.D., as well as his B.A. in Political Science, from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. He is a member of the District of Columbia Bar Association.

Kachel brings more than a decade of experience to her clients, designing and implementing federal funding and policy strategies on matters related to economic development, freight and passenger rail, mass transit, aviation, and port development. She is a two-time awardee of the Bryce Harlow Foundation Fellowship and serves as chair of its Alumni Advisory Board. Kachel holds an M.A. in Government and an M.B.A. from Johns Hopkins University.

Tennent has more than 40 years of experience in the railroad industry beginning as a front-line supervisor in the Norfolk and Western's locomotive shops. His career encompasses assignments with railroad companies, rolling stock manufacturers, government financial institutions, public

transportation authorities, and international state-owned railways as well as owning and running his own small engineering and manufacturing firm. This has provided him with a unique understanding of technical and managerial issues as well as the role of government entities in this sector. Tennent has a Bachelor of Mechanical Engineering degree from the University of Delaware and is a licensed Professional Engineer.

Arthur has an extensive background working with nonprofits and engaging in fundraising efforts with state and local government and associations. At her previous firm, she was notably responsible for managing the firm's long-term strategic goals and day-to-day operations, harnessing her strong experience in operational and information technology management, including revenue management, finance and accounting oversight, risk management, human resources and legal matters, facilities, and outsourcing. Arthur received her B.A. in English Language and Linguistics from the University of Banja Luka, Bosnia.

Hartwell is a seasoned lobbying and public relations professional who has strong experience managing national and local grassroots political activities and legislative initiatives on behalf of corporate and industry association clients. His background notably includes writing and processing over \$200 million dollars in transportation grant and loan applications as well as securing congressional approval of a short line railroad rehabilitation tax credit, which was extended six times since 2007 and was made permanent in 2020. Additionally, he led a government affairs effort related to federal regulatory approval of a leading railroad merger. Hartwell received his B.A. from the University of Michigan.

Sherman focuses on transportation and public sector government relations, project management, funding, and business analysis. He has extensive experience preparing applications for federal

assistance for infrastructure capital projects, and has secured more than \$69 million in grant funding for clients across 13 separate awards. He has provided compliance support for rail operators and industry suppliers, including for projects and acquisitions subject to federal domestic content requirements, such as Buy America. Sherman holds a Master of Public Policy degree from American University and a B.A. in International Affairs from The George Washington University.