

THOMAS M. SUSMAN
Strategic Advisor, Governmental Affairs Office



Thomas M. Susman became the Strategic Advisor for the Governmental Affairs Office in September 2018 after he retired as the Director of the Governmental Affairs Office and Associate Executive Director of the American Bar Association, a position he held since May 2008. The Governmental Affairs Office serves as the focal point for the Association's advocacy efforts before Congress, the Executive Branch, and other governmental entities on diverse issues of importance to the legal profession.

Prior to joining the ABA in 2008, he was a partner in the Washington Office of Ropes & Gray LLP for 27 years. There his work included counseling, litigation, and lobbying on a wide range of regulatory, antitrust, lobbying, ethics, and information law issues. He handled legislative and regulatory matters on behalf of businesses, trade associations, and nonprofit organizations in a variety of industries. He was active in seeking enactment of legislation, in obtaining appropriations for specific projects, in blocking or amending legislative proposals, and in counseling targets of congressional investigations.

Before joining Ropes & Gray, Tom served on Capitol Hill for over 11 years. He was Chief Counsel to the Senate Subcommittee on Administrative Practice and Procedure and General Counsel to the Antitrust Subcommittee and to the Senate Judiciary Committee. Prior to that, he served in the Office of Legal Counsel of the U.S. Department of Justice

He is a nationally recognized expert on lobbying, freedom of information, and administrative law. He co-edits the American Bar Association's Lobbying Manual; served as an adjunct professor on lobbying at The American University's Washington College of Law; and chaired the Ethics Committee of the American League of Lobbyists for over a decade. His articles address lobbying reform, reciprocity, contingent fee lobbying, and the proper role of campaign contributions in lobbying. He has also written, taught, and lectured both in the U.S. and abroad on transparency and access to government information; he received the American Library Association's "Champion of Public Access" award in 2009 and the Collaboration on Government Secrecy's "Robert Vaughn FOIA Legend" award in 2008, and is Founding President of the D.C. Open Government Coalition. Tom chaired the Administrative Law Section of the ABA

Tom previously served in the ABA's House of Delegates and on its Board of Governors. He is a member of the American Law Institute (is an advisor to the American Law Institute's project on government ethics), was Chairman of the National Judicial College Board, and was president of the District of Columbia Public Library Foundation. He is a graduate of Yale University and received his J.D. from the University of Texas Law School, where he was editor-in-chief of the Texas Law Review and a member of the Order of the Coif. In 2011 he was named Outstanding Alumnus of the University of Texas Law School.

Tom lives in Washington, D.C., with his wife, Susan Braden, Chief Judge of the U.S. Court of Federal Claims. His four children and ten grandchildren are dispersed throughout the country.