

Kevin B. O'Connor

Kevin B. O'Connor founded O'Connor CARES Solutions in 2016 to assist clients achieve their objective and succeed by crafting innovative solutions and creating opportunities regardless of the political, economic, or social climates. His consultation and advocacy provide value added services to those seeking to influence policy makers; develop marketing and growth opportunities for their enterprise; navigate labor and financial markets; understand the unique characteristics and politics of Taft-Hartley and Public Pension Funds and, most importantly, develop strategies and solutions to survive and succeed in the marketplace.

Kevin has been widely recognized as one of the most effective lobbyists/advocates on federal and state legislative and regulatory issues. His counsel and advice are welcomed on both sides of the aisle.

He served as Assistant to the General President of the International Association of Fire Fighters, a Washington-based labor union and fire service organization representing 330,000 members in the United States and Canada. Mr. O'Connor was responsible for directing the IAFF's Governmental Affairs, Political Action, and Public Policy Division from 2000-2016. He returned to the IAFF as a senior consultant and advisor in 2021.

He also served as Managing Editor of the award-winning IAFF Magazine and Website from 2000-2005 and directed their Public Relations and Strategic Communications efforts during that period. Kevin's lobbying efforts helped pass legislation allowing portability of 457 Deferred Compensation Plans which, in turn, enabled the IAFF to launch its highly successful IAFF-Financial Corporation which now has over \$6 billion under management as well as providing a litany of insurance and other products to members. Kevin led the effort in chartering and launching the IAFF-FC.

During Kevin's tenure the IAFF political action committee, FIREPAC grew from slightly over \$1 million dollars per cycle to over \$6 million. FIREPAC now ranks in the top ½ of 1% of all federal PACs.

Previously, he served concurrently as president of the Maryland State and District of Columbia Professional Fire Fighters Association and the Baltimore County Fire Fighters Association, Local 1311. Mr. O'Connor also held the offices of trustee, and secretary-treasurer of his local union and legislative agent and vice president of the state association.

A Fire Fighter/EMT in the Baltimore County Fire Department for fifteen years, O'Connor worked in both field positions and as the administrative and fire ground Aide to the Chief of the Fire Department. In that role, he was instrumental in the planning and implementation of the county's transition to an 800 megahertz truncated communications system. Kevin received numerous commendations including a citation for his role in a rescue operation at a multiple alarm apartment fire.

Mr. O'Connor was an elected trustee of the two billion-dollar Baltimore County Employees Retirement System from 1987-2000 and served as chair for six years. Kevin has lectured both nationally and internationally on pension fund governance, actuarial issues, investment policy, and member communications.

He also served as a commissioner of the Maryland Economic Development Commission, commissioner of the Maryland Fire, Rescue, Education and Training Commission, co-chair of the Glendening-Townsend Gubernatorial Transition Committee for Public Safety, member of the Oversight Committee on the Maryland Occupational Safety and Health Commission, member of the Baltimore County Charter Review Commission and member of the 2004 Democratic Platform Drafting Committee.

Kevin is past chair of the Congressional Fire Service Institute's Board and is a recipient of the 2010 Mason Langford Award. He was a contributing Editor to Firehouse Magazine from 2014-2019.

Kevin served on the corporate board of the University of Maryland Medical Systems, which includes an academic medical facility, thirteen affiliated hospitals and the world-renowned R. Adams Cowley Shock Trauma Center from 2008-18. He also served as a Director of First Mariner Bank Corporation and the Baltimore Blast Indoor Soccer Team. Currently, he serves on the Board of Directors of the Babe Ruth Museum.

After the 2016 General Election, Kevin was appointed by DNC Chairman Tom Perez to serve on his transition team to evaluate Party operations and help chart a path to improving the DNC brand and win elections. Kevin has counseled both Democrat and GOP leadership on messaging to working Americans and trade union members.

Kevin was appointed to the Baltimore Board of Fire Commissioners by Mayor Brandon Scott in 2022. The Board provides advisory and adjudicative services to the Mayor, City Council and Fire Chief.

Mr. O'Connor attended Washington and Lee University majoring in Political Economy and History and is a graduate of the Harvard University Trade Union Program. He was the 1999 Labor Honoree of the State of Israel Bonds and the 2000 Labor Achievement Recipient of the Maryland Democratic Party. He is president emeritus of both the Maryland Professional Fire Fighters and the Baltimore County Fire Fighters Associations.