

Roger Severino is Vice President of Economic and Domestic Policy, and the Joseph C. and Elizabeth A. Anderlik Fellow at The Heritage Foundation.

Severino is a national authority on civil rights, conscience and religious freedom, the administrative state, and information privacy, particularly as applied to health care law and policy.

Severino spearheaded the HHS Accountability Project while a Senior Fellow at EPPC from 2021 to 2023. Previously, Severino was Director of HHS' Office for Civil Rights, where he led a team of over 250 staff enforcing our nation's civil rights, conscience and religious freedom, and health information privacy laws. He served from 2017 to 2021 and was the longest-serving OCR director of the past three decades.

Prior to joining HHS, Severino served for two years as Director of the DeVos Center for Religion and Civil Society at Heritage, advocating for life, family, and religious-freedom policies. Before that, he was a trial attorney for seven years at the U.S. Department of Justice's Civil Rights Division where he enforced the Fair Housing Act and the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Severino started his legal career at the Becket Fund for Religious Liberty, where he was Legal Counsel and Chief Operations Officer and defended the rights of people of all faiths under federal and international law.

Severino has been profiled in *The New York Times*, *The Atlantic*, *The Wall Street Journal*, and *The Hill* and has appeared on Fox News, CNN, MSNBC, NPR, and PBS, among others. In 2020, *The New York Times* dubbed him and his wife Carrie, "a conservative power couple" to be reckoned with.

Severino holds a JD from Harvard Law School, a master's degree in public policy, with highest distinction, from Carnegie Mellon University, and a bachelor's degree in business from the University of Southern California. He was appointed by President Trump to the Administrative Conference of the United States and is a member of the District of Columbia and the Commonwealth of Virginia bars.

As OCR director, Severino founded the federal government's first division dedicated exclusively to conscience and religious freedom compliance and enforcement. He enforced the Weldon Amendment for the first time against a state (California) after it coerced families and religious organizations into paying for abortion insurance coverage, leading to a \$200 million federal funding disallowance. He also enforced laws protecting pro-life pregnancy resource centers from discrimination by states hostile to their message and enforced laws prohibiting forced participation in abortions by medical professionals.

With respect to civil rights, Severino protected older persons and people with disabilities from being denied life-saving care due to discriminatory "quality of life" judgments, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. He also achieved a landmark sexual harassment resolution with Michigan State University in the wake of the Larry Nassar sexual assault scandal and protected the rights of non-English speakers to have equal access to health and human services.

In the area of health privacy, he secured the largest HIPAA monetary settlement in history and achieved the largest number of enforcement resolutions both in a single year and across four years. He also facilitated the transformational use of Skype, Zoom, and Facetime for delivery of telehealth during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond.

His regulatory reform activities resulted in a comprehensive conscience protection regulation and proposed a life-affirming disability rights regulation. He achieved regulatory savings of \$3.6 billion in health care industry costs over five years and identified and proposed an additional \$3.2 billion in cost savings from the repeal of ineffective and unnecessary regulatory burdens.

Severino is a Spanish speaker who teaches salsa and west coast swing in his spare time.