

**E. Wade Ballou, Jr., Legislative Counsel  
Office of the Legislative Counsel  
U.S. House of Representatives**



Wade Ballou was appointed the Legislative Counsel on July 1, 2016. He is the 8th person serving in this role.

The Legislative Counsel is responsible for the management, supervision, and administration of the Office of the Legislative Counsel, ensuring that the Office carries out its functions in all stages of the legislative process. The Office was established in 1919 and operates under a statutory charter enacted as title V of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1970 (2 U.S.C. 281 et seq.). The purpose of the Office is to advise and assist the House of Representatives, and its committees and Members, in the achievement of a clear, faithful, and coherent expression of legislative policies. The Office is charged with maintaining impartiality as to issues of legislative policy and is prohibited from advocating for the adoption or rejection of legislative policy. The Office is required to maintain the attorney-client privilege as to all communications between it and Members or committees.

Wade earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Forestry from Virginia Tech in 1980 and a Juris Doctor from the University of Virginia in 1983. He also earned a Graduate Certificate in Spiritual Direction Studies from Washington Theological Union in 2013.

Wade was appointed to the Office in 1983 and has extensive drafting experience in Federal law. During his early years in the Office he concentrated in foreign affairs. From 1986 to 1996 he specialized in issues relating to natural resources, public lands, Native Americans, veterans' affairs, and intelligence. In 1996 Wade joined the tax team, which he led from 2004 to 2016.

Wade works to improve the delivery of services to the House, and its Members and committees, and to provide educational opportunities with respect to the legislative process and software applications. He has partnered with the Clerk of the House and the Government Publishing Office, among others, in developing and improving the use of XMetal (the drafting authoring tool), the common legislative data standard, USLM (United States Legislative Markup), and comparative print tools.

Wade has worked with the House Democracy Partnership, the National Democratic Institute, the International Republican Institute, the Office of Parliamentary Affairs, and the Commonwealth Association of Legislative Counsel, and others. These meetings are for mutual education on drafting and technology matters common to legislative systems of government.

He is an Eagle Scout and has served in Scouting as Cubmaster and Scoutmaster.