ArentFox Schiff LLP
Attorneys

Craig Engle

PARTNER

Craig is the leader of ArentFox Schiff's Political Law group.



Industries

Media & Entertainment
Nonprofits & Associations

Practices

Government Enforcement & White Collar
Government Relations
— Political Law

International

Europe

Education

Georgetown University Law Center, JD, 1985
University of Cincinnati, BA, summa cum laude, 1982

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Craig Engle has over 40 years' experience advising political committees, nonprofits, candidates and office holders, corporations, media companies, foreign governments, lobbyists, celebrities, and high-net-worth individuals on all aspects of election, tax, and ethics laws, including corporate formation and governance work, Congressional investigations, public policy strategies, and government functions.

Craig joined the firm in 2001 after a distinguished career on Capitol Hill and regularly consults with clients and attorneys in over nine of ArentFox Schiff's practice and industry groups and in the firm 's New York and Los Angeles offices.

Client Work

Craig's clients have included several hundred candidates, political committees, nonprofits, Fortune 500 and start-up corporations, office holders, law firms, media outlets, sports franchises, individuals, and governments. Craig and the Political Law group regularly counsels these clients in the highly regulated and scrutinized areas of:

- Federal Election Commission (FEC) regulation of campaign finance practices for PACs, candidates, and party committees
- Internal Revenue Service (IRS) regulation of nonprofits, charities, and trade associations
- Lobbying Disclosure Act (LDA) and Foreign Agent Registration Act (FARA) and Foreign Corrupt Practices Act (FCPA) Compliance
- Congressional Ethics (HLOGA), Executive Branch Lobbying, conflict of interest, and Personal Financial Disclosure (PFD) requirements
- Federal Communication Commission (FCC) regulation of broadcast, internet based, telephone and social media political activity
- Department of State (DOS) and Department of Defense (DOD) regulation of foreign entities'

contracting and lobbying activities in the United States

- Federal Trade Commission (FTC) regulation of telemarketing fundraising and use of funds by charities and political organization
- Department of Justice (DOJ) enforcement of civil and criminal laws regarding white collar investigations of false claims, fraud, public integrity, government contracting, and mail and wire fraud
- Alternative dispute resolution advisor in corporate litigation matters
- Defense in Congressional investigations and special counsel in internal investigations
- Media relations, contract negotiation enforcement, audits, and governmental relations
- Counsel on voting rights, domestic and foreign election administration, ballot referendum, contested elections and recounts
- Special counsel to foreign governments and local governments on specialized and confidential matters

Previous Work

Craig has served as general counsel to three presidential campaigns, co-authored three amicus briefs to the US Supreme Court, counseled over 100 candidates, Members of Congress, and political committees, and personally supervised the banking and reporting of over $300 million in campaign finance expenditures. He has helped more than 100 ArentFox Schiff clients create corporations, nonprofits, and political committees by serving as their incorporator, initial board member, and assistant treasurer.

Craig served as the general counsel to several national membership associations and multimillion-dollar political committees. He is a consultant to Congressional oversight committees and political appointees seeking to comply with federal ethics laws. Craig also focuses on California state and local political and ethics laws.

Craig is probably best-known for bringing innovation to politics. He created one of the first SuperPacs and the ability of political parties to make independent expenditures. He also created the election-related framework for electronic funds transfers, texting political contributions, won several unanimous Advisory Opinions at the FEC opening new areas of law, was the plaintiff in the defeat of New York State's Anti- Citizens United Law in the Second Circuit, participated in striking DOMA in United States v. Windsor, and created new corporate forms for political activity.

Craig served as General Counsel to the National Republican Senatorial Committee (NRSC) from 1995-2000. He was responsible for the legal matters of a $90 million-per-cycle Republican National Political Party Committee. At the NRSC Craig created new joint fundraising agreements that are still widely used today and made the first-ever independent expenditure by a political party.

From 1985 to 1995, Craig served at the Federal Election Commission as Legal and Executive Assistant to a Commissioner appointed by President Reagan. Craig wrote the first "Statement of Reasons," that created the system still in use today by FEC Commissioners in agency litigation.

Publications, Presentations & Recognitions

A frequent commenter and editorial writer on key political events, Craig has been featured in leading news publications including *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *Bloomberg*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *Mother Jones*, *The Daily Caller*, *LX*, and *Law360*. He also appears on C-Span, CNN, and ABC Nightly News. Craig was often a source for analysis and commentary about the investigation into the Internal Revenue Service's targeting of conservative nonprofit organizations.

The Washington Post has described Craig as "a lawyer, a very important lawyer." Every year from 2006 to 2026, *Chambers USA* has recognized Craig as one of the nation's leading political law attorneys, citing favorable client reviews such as, "Craig is an amazing strategist and bar none in regard to skill and professionalism" and, "The finest legal mind we have worked with." In 2000, Craig was named one of "Politics Fabulous Fifty," by the Capitol Hill publication *Roll Call*. For more than a decade, he has been recognized as one of *Washingtonian*'s "Top Lawyers for Campaigns and Elections," in their biennial list. Craig was recognized by *Super Lawyers* from 2007 to 2009 and again from 2013 to 2015. He was also rated among the *Best Lawyers in America* for Government Relations and Criminal Defense-White Collar in 2024.

He is a popular writer, speaker, and panelist on a wide range of federal and legislative issues. He has served as a guest lecturer at the Georgetown University Law Center, American University College of Law, George Washington Law School and George Mason Law School.

Craig's publications include:

- "Supreme Court Hears Oral Argument on California's Attempt To Collect Names of Donors to Nonprofits," ArentFox Schiff client alert; April 27, 2021
- "Supreme Court to Hear Challenge to Nonprofit Donor Disclosure Case ," ArentFox Schiff client alert; February 9, 2021
- "Michael Cohen Didn't Actually Violate Federal Campaign Laws. Here's Why ," *The Daily Signal* ; August 27, 2018
- "Quid No Quo: Why The Supreme Court's Decision in *US v. McDonnell* was Right," *Law360* ; July 15, 2016
- "Same Sex Marriage and the 1st Amendment," *New York Daily News*; April 27, 2015
- "Does McCain-Feingold Violate the 10th Amendment, Too?" 2003
- "What Happened to Campaign Finance Reform?" ArentFox Schiff client alert; 2003
- "How Much Democracy Does $1,000 Buy?" *Legal Times*; May 4, 1998
- "Buckley Over Time: A New Problem with Old Contribution Limits," *Notre Dame Law School of Legislation*; 1998 (Vol. 24, No. 2)

His speaking engagements include:

- Speaker, "The LDA Exemption amid Heightened DOJ Scrutiny: A Narrowed Interpretation and Potential for Repeal?," American Conference Institute National Forum on FARA – Foreign Agents Registration Act; December 2023
- Panelist, "Preparing for the 2020 Elections," New York State Bar Association; February 2020
- Panelist, "Influencing Policy Makers: Best Practices in Lobbying and Government Relations Engagement," International Trademark Association Leadership Meeting; 2017
- Guest Lecturer, "The Fundamentals and Future of the Voting Rights Act," New York Federal Bar Association; 2016
- Republican National Convention Contest Committee; 2016
- Speaker, "An Introduction to Campaign Finance Law, and What Remains of It 40 Years After *Buckley v. Valeo*," *Lawline*; 2016
- Guest Lecturer, "Trends in Election Law," American University School of Law; 2015
- Association of Community Colleges and Public Policy; 2014
- Featured Speaker, "State Financial Officers Association on Regulations and the Detroit Bankruptcy," 2013
- Featured Speaker, Mexican and Brazilian Electoral Courts; 2011
- Election Law Speaker, Republican National Lawyers Association; 2010, 2011
- Testified before Nevada Governor's SAGE Commission; 2009
- Panelist on Presidential Elections, Notre Dame University; 2003
- State Government Leadership Foundation; 2003
- Guest Lecturer, Georgetown University and George Washington University Law Center Seminars; 1996 to present

Life Beyond the Law

Craig is a collector of the artwork of the famous *New Yorker* illustrator Peter Arno and French poster artist Leonetto Cappiello. Craig was featured, along with his collection of 500 Holiday Inn postcards, in a *Washington Post* "Style Section" article titled, "The Collector." He thinks he has read every Dashiell Hammett and Perry Mason novel ever written. He likes acrostics and is an average bridge

player.

Bar Admissions

District of Columbia

Court Admissions

Supreme Court of Ohio
Supreme Court of the United States
US Court of Appeals, District of Columbia Circuit