



Barbara J. Comstock*

Senior Advisor

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Former Congresswoman Barbara Comstock provides strategic counsel to clients on a range of matters, including cybersecurity and privacy issues, and managing high-stakes oversight hearings of businesses and individuals.

Barbara Comstock, senior advisor with Baker Donelson, offers clients decades of policy experience in the legislative, administrative, and private sector arenas, as well as a lifetime of relationships, to build winning coalitions and strategies for clients in today's challenging policy and political environments. She's active in the technology and cybersecurity areas, national security and space, and congressional investigations.

Barbara was elected to Congress in 2014, and served two terms representing Virginia's Tenth Congressional District, making her the first woman elected to that seat. She was named as one of the "Top Ten Most Effective Lawmakers" in the 115th Congress by the Center for Effective Lawmaking, a joint effort of the University of Virginia and Vanderbilt University.

During her time in Congress, Barbara was a leader on technology and cybersecurity issues, chairing the Science, Space, and Technology Committee's Research and Technology subcommittee, as well as serving on the Joint Economic Committee, the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, and the House Administration Committee. Her legislative achievements include passing legislation to promote women and disadvantaged populations in STEM, as well as expanding research in the technology space. Barbara also was the leader on anti-sexual harassment legislation in Congress, and legislation to tackle the opioid crisis and gang crime. She partnered with Senator McCain to reauthorize multi-year firefighter grants to increase innovation and public safety. While in Congress, Barbara was the only woman in the Virginia congressional delegation and the only Virginia member to chair a subcommittee.

Prior to serving in Congress, Barbara served as a Member of the Virginia House of Delegates. There she was also a leader on technology issues serving as chairwoman of the Science and Technology Committee. She also served on the Commerce and Labor Committee and the General Laws Committee. Barbara was a go-to leader in technology, authoring and passing legislation such as the Research and Development Tax Credit, Data Center Tax Incentives, the first Telework bills in Virginia, and legislation on human trafficking and health care. She received the Virginia Chamber's Free Enterprise Award and Competitiveness Award.

Prior to elected office, Barbara co-founded her own public affairs firm and was a senior partner at Blank Rome Government Relations. She also served as Director of the Office of Public Affairs for the U.S. Department of Justice, overseeing the communications efforts at the Justice Department and FBI, handling communications dealing with major terrorism investigations, corporate fraud, and antitrust matters.

Barbara worked as a strategic advisor for the Mitt Romney presidential campaigns, was head of Research and Strategy at the Republican National Committee, and worked with the George W. Bush 2000 presidential campaign. Barbara first worked on Capitol Hill as a senior aide to Virginia Congressman Frank Wolf (1990 – 1995), working on transportation, health care, business, and appropriations matters. She also served as the Chief Counsel for the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee and as outside counsel on numerous high-profile investigations.

In 2013, Barbara founded "The Young Women's Leadership Program" for women in high school and junior high, which is now housed at the Barbara Comstock Institute for Women in Leadership at George Mason University's Schar School of Policy and Government.

Barbara regularly appears on network and cable news shows such as "Meet the Press," "Fox News Sunday," CNN's "State of the Union," and others as a commentator on political and policy issues of the day.

Professional Honors & Activities

- Fellow – Harvard Kennedy School of Government's Institute of Politics (Spring 2019)
- Named by the Center for Effective Lawmaking among the Top Ten "Highly Effective Lawmakers of the 115th Congress" (2019)
- Named by the *Washingtonian* as one of the "100 Most Powerful Women in Washington" (2017)
- Recipient – "Manufacturing Legislative Excellence," National Association of Manufacturing (2018)
- Recipient – "2018 Outstanding Woman," American Legion Auxiliary, Department of Virginia
- Recipient – "Guardian of Small Business," National Federation of Independent Business (NFIB) (2015, 2016, 2018)
- Recipient – "In a Heartbeat" award, Youth for Tomorrow (2018)
- Recipient – "Legislator of the Year," Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) (2017)
- Recipient – "Leadership Award," The Women's Center (2016)
- Recipient – "Eagle Award" for STEM leadership, Achievement Rewards for College Scientists (ARCS) Foundation, Metropolitan Washington Chapter (2016)
- Recipient – "Hero of Main Street," National Retail Federation (2015, 2016)
- Recipient – "Free Enterprise Award," Virginia Chamber of Commerce (2012, 2014)
- Recipient – "Congressional Champion" for People with Disabilities award, AbilityOne
- Recipient – "Tip Hero" award for legislation and work on preventing human trafficking, Airline Ambassadors International
- Recipient – "Barbara K. Olson Woman of Valor" award, Independent Women's Forum
- Recipient – "Carolyn Pultz Brown Leadership Award," Ovarian Cancer Research Fund Alliance for impact on the ovarian cancer community
- Recipient – Women in Government Relations Congressional Leadership Award
- Recipient – Jill's House "Light of Hope" award for legislative work for children with disabilities
- Recipient – "Leadership award," National Capital Lyme Association
- Board Member – Trustar Bank
- Board Member – Veterans Against Alzheimer's
- Board Member – Friends of Clemyjontri Park
- Board Member – Just Ask Prevention Project (Educates the community about the signs of human trafficking)
- Board Member – In Defense of Christians' Congressional Advisory Board
- Board Member – Winning 4 Women Advisory Board (an organization dedicated to electing more Republican women to office)

Publications

- "Liability Protection Provisions in the New Republican COVID Relief Package," *Washington, D.C. Update* (September 2020)
- "How to Handle Congressional Queries on COVID-19 Relief," *Law360* (June 17, 2020)
- "Congress CARES (Act): Expect Oversight Investigations" (June 11, 2020)
- "The USAF Shouldn't Narrow Competition for Its Satellite Launches," *Defense One* (March 2019)
- "Data Centers Keep Virginia a Strong Leader in the 21st-Century Tech Economy," *Richmond Times-Dispatch* (February 2019)



Speaking Engagements

- "Congress Cares (Act): Expect Oversight Investigations," Celesq® Webcast (July 2, 2020)
- Panelist – "The Female Candidate for Office: Challenges and Hurdles," National Archives Panel (June 2019)



Webinars

- Conversations on Leadership: In an Era of Transformation, Transition, Transparency and Trust (November 2020)
- Congress CARES: Expect Oversight Investigations (July 2020)
- Navigating Congressional Investigations (June 2020)



Education

- Georgetown University Law Center, J.D., 1986
- Middlebury College, B.A., 1981, cum laude



Admissions

- Virginia, 1986

* Ms. Comstock is an associate member of the Virginia Bar. She is not engaged in the active practice of law.