



MARCH 6, 2025

# AG POWER PLAY

## THE CONTENDERS



50 State



 **ALABAMA**

 **ARIZONA**

 **ARKANSAS**

 **CALIFORNIA**

 **COLORADO**



The ongoing constitutional tug-of-war between the Judicial and Executive branches is just beginning to unfold. With a single AG now able to transform public policy, analyzing the political future of State Attorneys General races in 2025-2026 is essential for organizations navigating this emerging regulatory landscape. Our series of reports from the HB Strategies 50 State Team, **AG Power Play: The Contenders**, profiles the incumbents and candidates of 30 states, beginning with Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, California, and Colorado.

The first five states demonstrate that term limits, ambition, and shifting political alignments make Attorneys General contests pivotal to policy outcomes. In Alabama, term-limited AG Steve Marshall (R) leaves an open seat drawing significant Republican interest, with several high-profile candidates positioning themselves for what will likely be a decisive GOP primary. Arizona's political battleground status shows in AG Kris Mayes' (D) razor-thin 280-vote victory margin in 2022, creating one of 2026's most competitive races. Arkansas AG Tim Griffin (R) faces minimal opposition in the solidly Republican state. California's AG Rob Bonta (D) recently committed to seeking reelection rather than pursuing the open governor's seat. In Colorado, AG Phil Weiser's (D) gubernatorial run creates an open contest in an increasingly Democratic-leaning state. The dynamics of these five, and all 30 State Attorneys General races, could alter the balance of power and transform public policy across the United States.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andy Blunt". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending from the end of the name.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER  
EXECUTIVE CHAIRMAN

Previous Five Attorneys General: 4 Republicans; 1 Democrat

Previous Five AGs Advancing to Governor or Senator: 2

Trump 2024 %: Trump carried Alabama: 64.6 – 34.1%

Presidential History: Alabama has voted for the Republican presidential nominee in the last 12 consecutive elections.

Last time voting for a Democratic presidential nominee: 1976: Jimmy Carter

Attorney General Steve Marshall cannot succeed himself in his present position and though he is not viewed as a potential gubernatorial contender, it is probable that he will run for Lt. Governor. The incumbent Governor, Kay Ivey (R), is also term-limited in 2026 and the current Lt. Governor, Will Ainsworth (R), is expected to run for Governor. Therefore, the Lt. Governor position, an elected post in Alabama, will also be open.

Considering the state's strong Republican voting history over the past 40+ years, the eventual GOP nominee for Attorney General will have the inside track toward winning the November 2026 election. Therefore, the Republican primary is likely the key political battle to watch.

We can expect a crowded AG Republican primary. At this point, the following individuals have either indicated they are considering running or have been rumored as a potential candidate: (all are Republicans; no Democrat has been yet mentioned; no individual has officially announced at this writing)

Jay Mitchell – Alabama Supreme Court Justice

Arthur Orr – State Senator; District 3 – Decatur

Katherine Robertson – Chief Counsel, Office of the Alabama Attorney General

Jay Town – Former US Attorney

**HB**  
STRATEGIES

50 State

# ALABAMA

**INCUMBENT:**

**Steve Marshall (R)**

**APPOINTED:**

**February 2017 to fill a vacancy**

**FIRST ELECTED:**

**2022**

**VICTORY PERCENTAGE:**

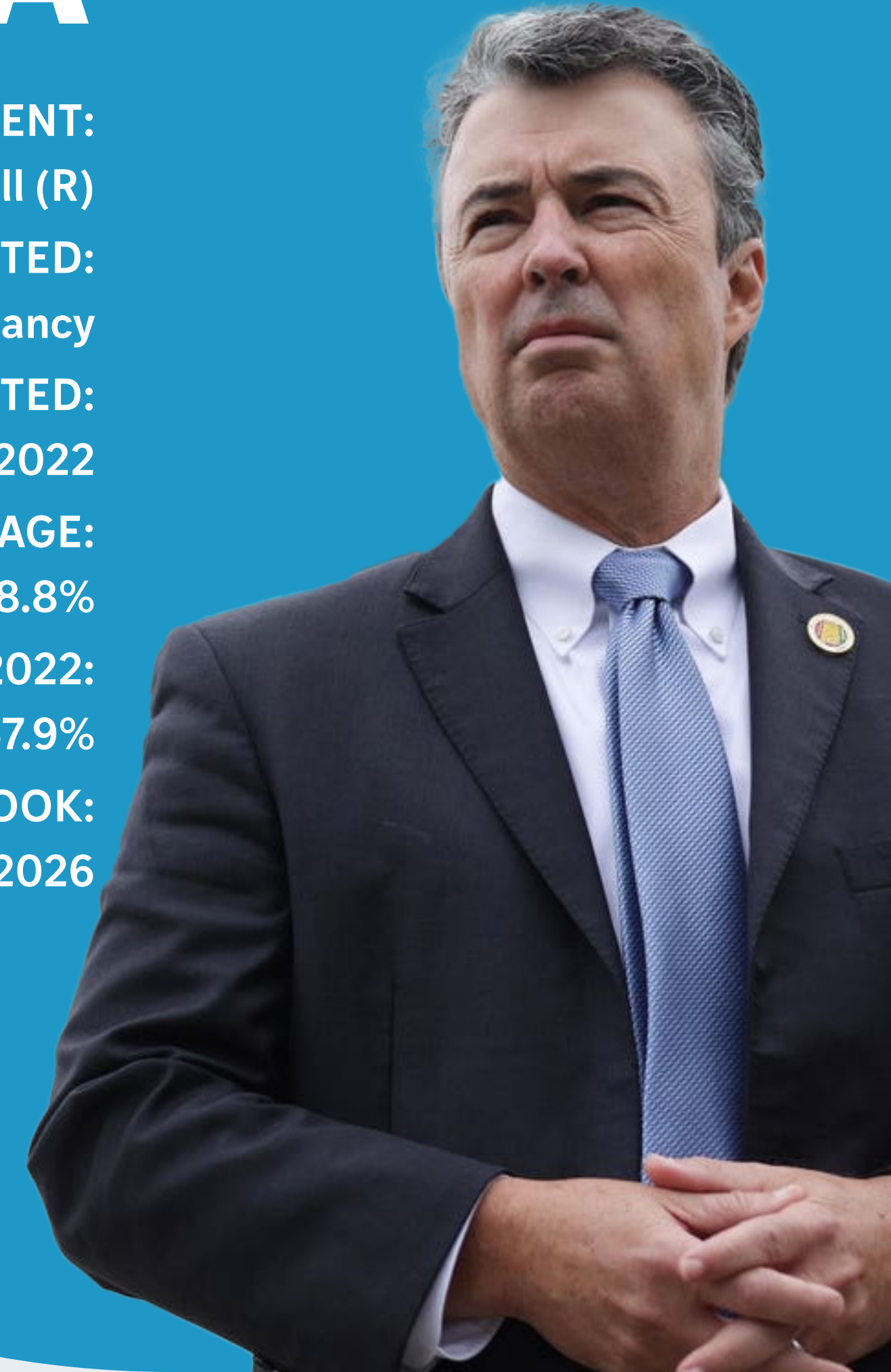
**58.8%**

**RE-ELECTED 2022:**

**67.9%**

**OUTLOOK:**

**AG Marshall is term-limited in 2026**



Previous Five Attorneys General: 3 Democrats; 2 Republicans

Previous Five AGs Advancing to Governor or Senator: 2

Trump 2024 %: Carried Arizona: 52.2 – 46.7%

Presidential History: Arizona has voted for the Republican presidential nominee in the 11 of the last 13 elections.

Last time voting for a Democratic presidential nominee: 2020: Joe Biden

Attorney General Kris Mayes won her 2022 election by just 280 votes from more than 2.5 million cast ballots. She defeated Republican Abe Hamadeh who is now the US Representative from Arizona's 8th District. Mayes ran to the ideological left during the campaign and has largely run her office in that manner. Starting with indicting Arizonans who wanted to form an alternative electoral vote slate, to attempting to stop the Albertsons/Kroger grocery store merger, Ms. Mayes has defined herself as an ideological Attorney General.

At this point, AG Mayes has no announced opposition for the Democratic primary. Conversely, two Republicans have already declared their candidacies, state Senate President Warren Petersen (R-Gilbert) and former Tucson City Councilman Rodney Glassman. The latter has been a frequent candidate for several offices. Assuming that Sen. Petersen wins the Republican primary, or another strong potential candidate comes forward, the Attorneys General contest will again yield a highly competitive 2026 campaign.

Arizona has become a purple state. In the last nine statewide races in 2022 and 2024, Democrats won five and Republicans' four. With no Arizona Senate race in this election cycle, the state will host what promises to be a tight Governor's race along with the competitive AG campaign, and at least two hotly contested congressional campaigns.

# ARIZONA

**INCUMBENT:**

**Kris Mayes (D)**

**FIRST ELECTED:**

**2022**

**VICTORY PERCENTAGE:**

**49.94%**

**OUTLOOK:**

**AG Mayes is expected to seek re-election and face a competitive re-election opponent**



Previous Five Attorneys General: 3 Democrats; 2 Republicans

Previous Five AGs Advancing to Governor, Lt. Governor, or Senator: 4

Trump 2024 %: Carried Arkansas: 64.2 – 33.6%

Presidential History: Arkansas has voted for the Republican presidential nominee in the 10 of the last 13 elections.

Last time voting for a Democratic presidential nominee: 1996: Bill Clinton

The 2026 election cycle should be rather quiet in the Natural State. Both Sen. Tom Cotton (R) and Gov. Sarah Huckabee Sanders (R) look to have easy runs for re-election against minor opposition, thus setting the tone for the rest of the ballot.

Of the eight Arkansas statewide races it appears that only one, the State Land Commissioner, will be an open race due to term limits. The most competitive recent year was 2022 when six of the political contests were open and a pair of office holders were swapping positions.

In that year, Attorney General Leslie Rutledge (R), ineligible to seek a third term, and Lt. Governor Tim Griffin (R), also reaching the end of his term limited service, decided to switch positions. Therefore, Ms. Rutledge was elected Lt. Governor, and Mr. Griffin, Attorney General.

At this point, no one has come forward to challenge Mr. Griffin, and he is not expected to face a major opponent. The Arkansas 2026 election will favor the status quo.

# ARKANSAS

**INCUMBENT:**

**Tim Griffin (R)**

**FIRST ELECTED:**

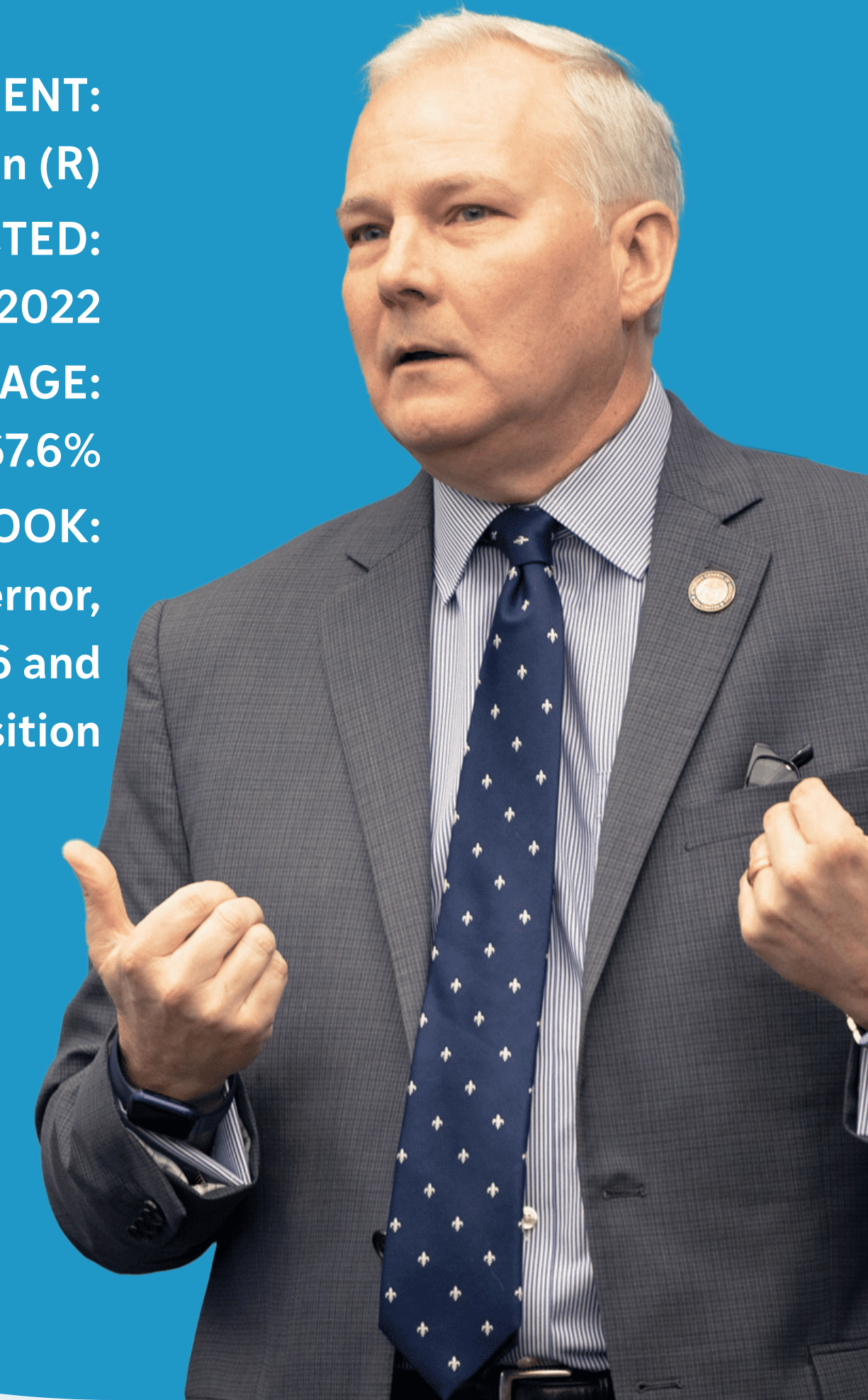
**2022**

**VICTORY PERCENTAGE:**

**67.6%**

**OUTLOOK:**

**AG Griffin, the state's former Lt. Governor, is expected to seek re-election in 2026 and should face only token opposition**



Previous Five Attorneys General: 5 Democrats; including former Vice President Kamala Harris; former Governor Jerry Brown; ex-HHS Secretary Xavier Becerra

Previous Five AGs Advancing to Governor or Senator: 2

Trump 2024 %: Lost California 38.3% to Kamala Harris' 58.5%

Presidential History: California has voted for the Democratic presidential nominee in 9 of the past 13 elections.

Last time voting for a Republican presidential nominee: 1988: George H.W. Bush

# CALIFORNIA

Gov. Gavin Newsom nominated Mr. Bonta, a former state Assemblyman from Oakland, as Attorney General when then-AG Xavier Becerra became Secretary of Health and Human Services in the Biden Administration. Mr. Bonta was subsequently confirmed in both houses of the California legislature.

In the 2022 election, AG Bonta easily defeated former US Assistant Attorney General Nathan Hochman to win a full term in his own right. Two years later, Mr. Hochman, running as an Independent in 2024 as opposed to a Republican, defeated Los Angeles County District Attorney George Gascon.

At this point, no one has come forward to announce a 2026 challenge to Mr. Bonta. With a Governor, Lt. Governor, State Treasurer, and Superintendent of Public Instruction positions all open it is unlikely that Mr. Bonta will see much competition for his 2026 re-election effort.

**INCUMBENT:**

**Rob Bonta (D)**

**APPOINTED:**

**April 23, 2021**

**FIRST ELECTED:**

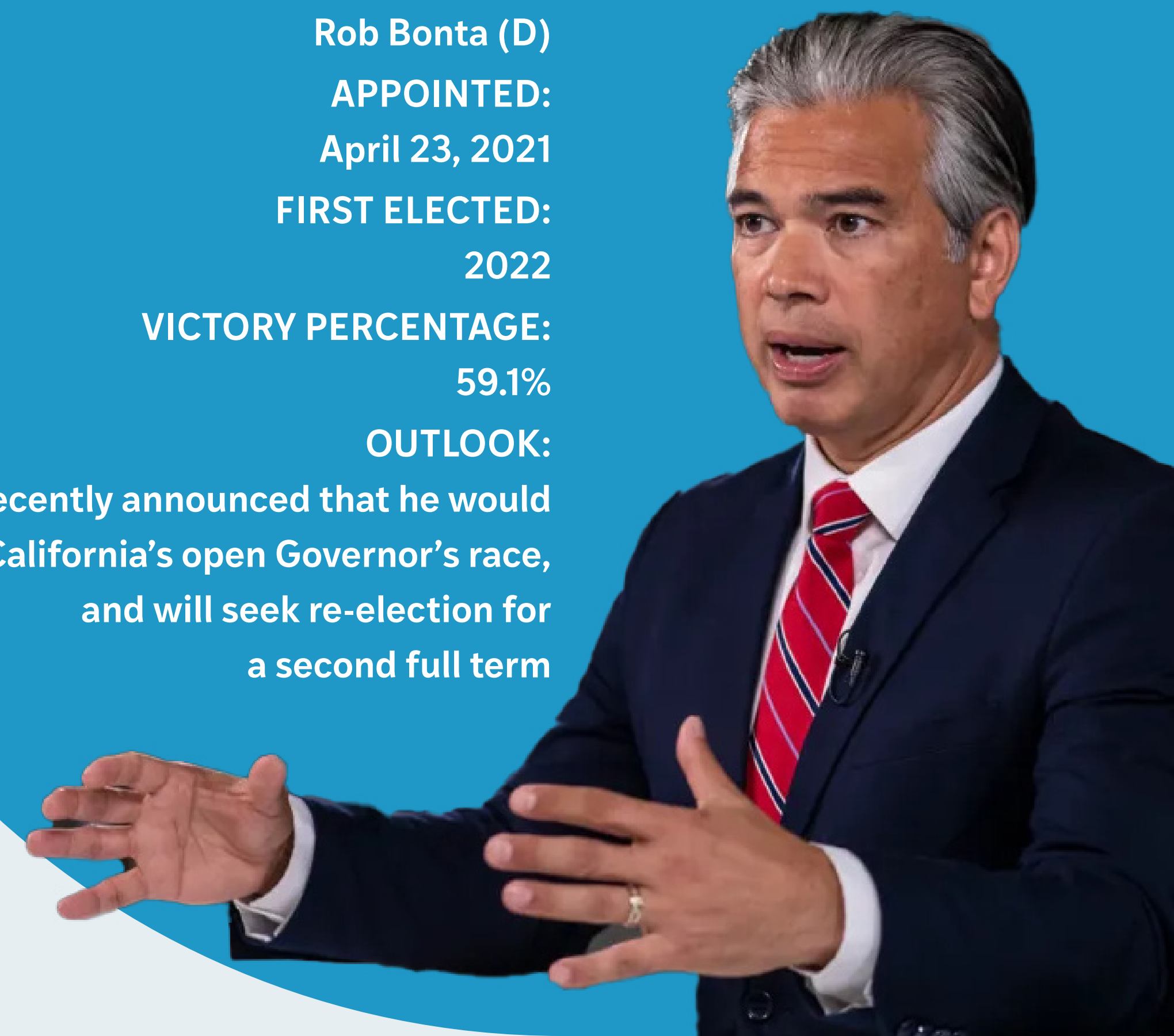
**2022**

**VICTORY PERCENTAGE:**

**59.1%**

**OUTLOOK:**

**AG Bonta recently announced that he would not enter California's open Governor's race, and will seek re-election for a second full term**



Previous Five Attorneys General: 3 Republicans; 2 Democrats

Previous Five AGs Advancing to Governor or Senator: 1

Trump 2024 %: Lost Colorado 43.1 to Kamala Harris' 54.1%

Presidential History: Colorado has voted for the Democratic presidential nominee in 7 of the past 13 elections, but Democrats have won the last five consecutive elections.

Last time voting for a Republican presidential nominee: 2004: George W. Bush

The Colorado Attorney General's race will be an open political contest in 2026. Incumbent AG Phil Weiser (D) is ineligible to seek a third term and has announced for Governor since incumbent Jared Polis (D) is also term-limited.

The open AG race is beginning to take shape. Boulder County District Attorney Michael Dougherty (D) officially announced his intention to run for Attorney General as did former state House Speaker Crisanta Duran, becoming the first two Democrats enter the open statewide campaign. Local reports suggest that Secretary of State Jena Griswold (D), ineligible to seek a third term for her current position, is having second thoughts about running for Governor. Instead, Ms. Griswold may enter the Attorney General's contest, surmising that she may be the only statewide official in that race.

Another potential Democratic AG candidate is Adams County District Attorney Brian Mason. For the Republicans, former Arapahoe County DA John Kellner and ex-state Senator Bob Gardner are expected to enter the race. Democrats will be favored to hold the AG position. Depending upon how the AG field forms will ultimately determine the level of competitiveness. Expect this situation to change greatly over the ensuing months.

Turning to the open Governor's race, AG Weiser and Republican state Representative and pastor Scott Bottoms (R-Colorado Springs) and state Sen. Mark Baisley (R-Salida) have officially announced their candidacies.

The big news on the gubernatorial horizon is the possibility of US Sen. Michael Bennet (D) declaring his candidacy. If the Senator decides to run, several others considering the Governor's race may abandon such thought. US Reps. Joe Neguse (D-Lafayette/ Boulder) and Jason Crow (D-Aurora) are in this category.

For the Republicans, ex-Congressman Greg Lopez (R), state Senator and 2022 congressional candidate Barbara Kirkmeyer (R-Weld County), and Teller County Sheriff Jason Mikesell (R) are rumored to be potential candidates.

# COLORADO

**INCUMBENT:**

**Phil Weiser (D)**

**FIRST ELECTED:**

**2018**

**VICTORY PERCENTAGE:**

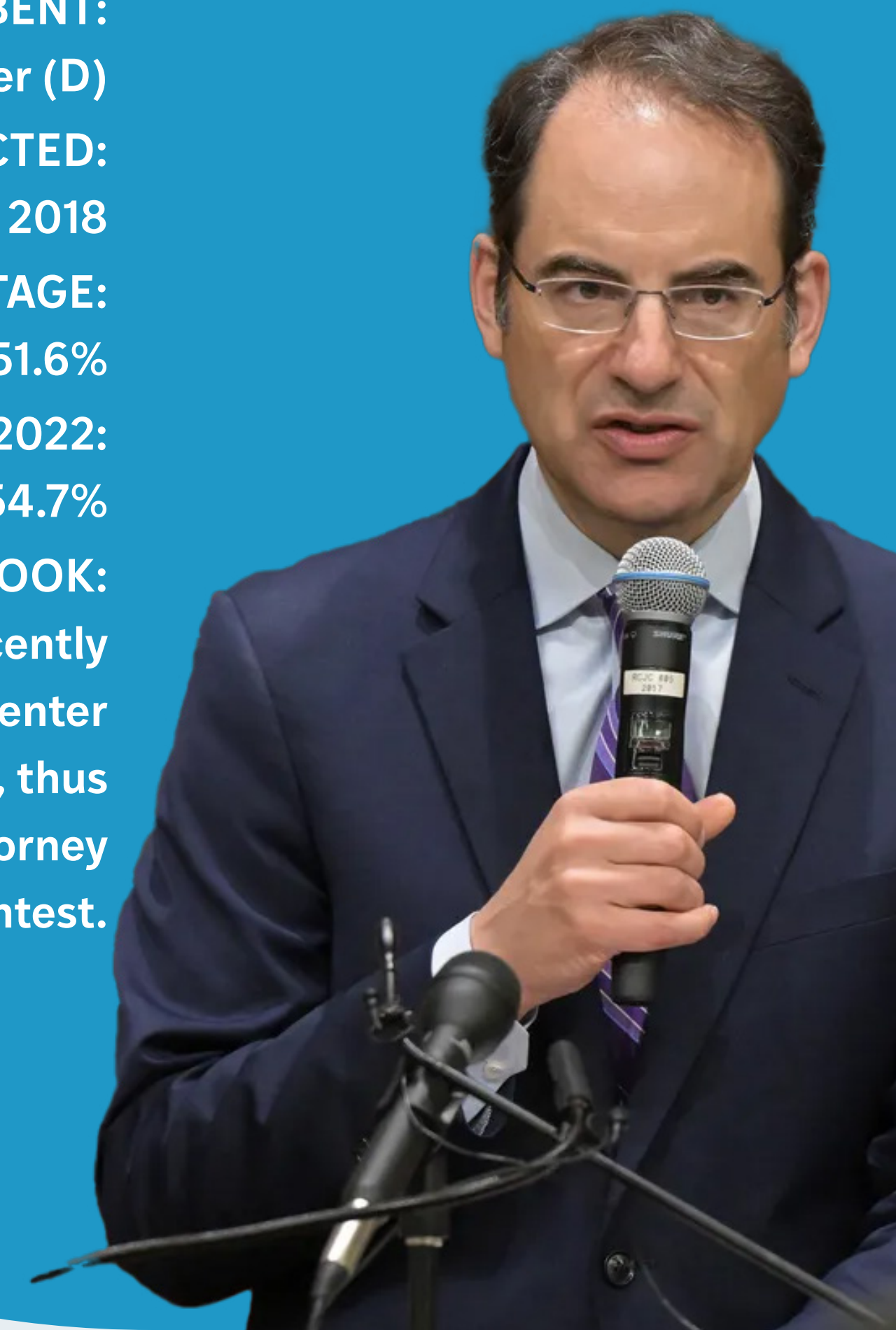
**51.6%**

**RE-ELECTED 2022:**

**54.7%**

**OUTLOOK:**

**AG Weiser is term-limited and recently announced that he would enter Colorado's open Governor's race, thus the 2026 electoral contest for Attorney General will also be an open contest.**





# 50 State



## Andy Blunt

*Executive Chairman  
Chief Executive Officer*

As a founding partner, Executive Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of HB Strategies, Andy has helped build a trusted national brand for federal and state lobbying with revenues and a client base to match. While Andy is leading the firm with its remarkable growth trajectory, clients continue to turn to him for help managing a crisis, polishing a brand, and understanding how government works and how to make it work for them. Andy advises top executives in boardrooms across the country and political candidates and elected leaders at all levels of government. He is a trusted advisor nationally whose extensive network of personal relationships is built on his lifelong immersion in politics and public policy. A tireless advocate, Andy has helped companies of all sizes successfully navigate complex legislative and regulatory environments and is consistently recognized as one of Washington’s “Top Lobbyists” by national media.



## Rochelle Mallett

*Executive Vice President  
State Government Affairs*

As Executive Vice President, State Government Affairs, Rochelle manages the firm’s network of state lobbying offices in Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Kansas, Maryland, Missouri, Nebraska, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Texas, and Wisconsin. HB Strategies clients benefit from Rochelle’s success in coordinating and fine-tuning legislative and public strategies that are targeted to specific client needs. She achieves significant outcomes through her careful approach to detailed strategies and an extensive national network of public policy and elected leaders - ultimately establishing trusted relationships on behalf of HBS clients. Earlier in her career she served as a legislative aide to U.S. Senator Deb Fischer.



## Dustin Brighton

*Managing Principal*

Dusty is a widely recognized expert in consumer privacy and anti-trust issues representing e-commerce and tech name brands like eBay and Microsoft. He has established a network of trusted relationships and credibility with elected leaders and influencers across the nation on issues such as privacy, net neutrality, and Section 230 liability protections. Dusty has also represented companies as members of industry trade associations and groups such as the National Association of Attorneys General, National Governors Association, and the Democratic and Republican Legislative Campaign Committees.



## Beverly Haydel

*Senior Advisor*

Beverly has more than a decade of experience working in both the private, public and nonprofit sectors. She has particular expertise in project management, coalition building, stakeholder engagement, public outreach, issue advocacy, policy development and legislative strategy. Beverly earlier served as Director of Civic Leadership Initiatives at the Baton Rouge Area Foundation where she managed the Foundation’s long-term projects throughout the greater Baton Rouge area. She began her career at Goldman Sachs as an Investment Banking Analyst based out of the company’s New York City headquarters.



## Maddie McMillian Green

*Deputy General Counsel for Contracting  
Principal*

An experienced attorney and successful advocate, Maddie recently served as Deputy Attorney General for Policy in the Missouri Attorney General’s Office. She advised the Attorney General on policy and legislation as well as developed and managed the office’s outreach initiatives. She previously served as Assistant Attorney General for Special Litigation, handling high-profile litigation at the state and federal level. Maddie began her career in the Missouri Governor’s Office, serving two governors and working closely with the executive cabinet. Maddie earlier served as chief of staff to the First Lady in the Missouri Governor’s Office, where she worked closely with the governor’s policy and legislative teams on issues including foster care, adoption, and child welfare advocacy.



## Carrie Hackenberger

*Principal*

Carrie is an experienced public policy advocate whose skill in the legislative process guides clients through complex challenges and creates valuable opportunities. She earlier served as Associate Director of the American Petroleum Institute Colorado where she helped lead the organization’s legislative and policy efforts across the state. Carrie was an effective advocate for the state’s oil and natural gas industry whether it was through regulatory proceedings or guiding legislative strategies in the General Assembly.



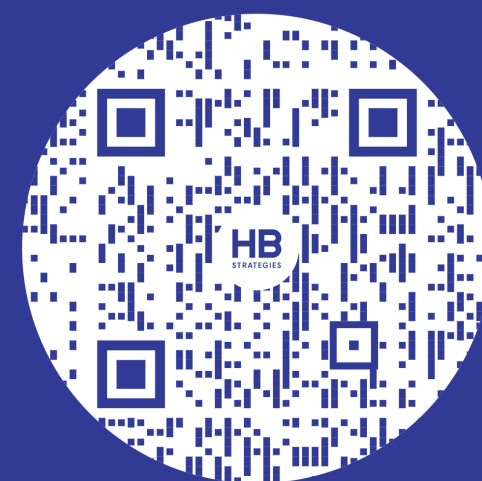
## Bradley Cooper

*Policy Associate*

Bradley assists teams of the federal practice group with research and readiness for client projects. He completed a term as a Fellow with the HB Strategies Federal team in the summer of 2024. Earlier he operated a successful Missouri-based consulting practice. Bradley studied socio-political communication at Missouri State University and was appointed the student representative to the school’s Board of Governors by Missouri Governor Mike Parson.



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