

William M. Kaneko

A Law Corporation

Partner



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Overview

William Kaneko is a partner in the Honolulu office, where he advises clients on administrative law, government relations, public affairs, strategic planning, lobbying and community relations. He represents clients before government agencies at the federal, state and county levels. He has been listed in *Best Lawyers in America* for government relations law, and named one of *Honolulu Magazine's* Best Lawyers in Hawaii, every year since 2009. In 2014 and 2017, *Best Lawyers* named him Hawaii Lawyer of the Year for Government Relations.

For more than 25 years, Mr. Kaneko has advised Fortune 500 companies, government agencies and nonprofits on policy, programmatic and legal issues relating to energy, health care, economic development, sustainability, technology, real estate and civil rights. He is highly skilled and widely recognized for understanding the legal, regulatory, policy and political frameworks in which companies and governments exist, and for developing practicable, interdisciplinary solutions to advance key initiatives.

Mr. Kaneko was the founder, president and chief executive officer of the Hawaii Institute for Public Affairs (HIPA), Hawaii's first nonprofit, nonpartisan and independent research and educational organization whose mission is to provide research, analysis and recommendations on public policy issues facing Hawaii. HIPA's research briefs, issue papers and publications provide fact, data and analysis that enabled decision-makers to make sound policy decisions that benefit the state.

Mr. Kaneko has served in various public affairs and government positions. In 1987, he was a national recipient of the CORO Foundation Fellowship in Public Affairs. From 1988 to 1993, he served on the professional staff of Governor John D. Waihee III, where he developed land use and housing policies in the Office of State Planning. In 1996, Mr. Kaneko was appointed director of Asian Pacific Affairs for the Democratic National Committee.

Mr. Kaneko served on the boards of the US Department of Justice Office of Redress Administration Citizens Advisory Board, the Hawaii Board of Public Accountancy, `Olelo Community Television, the Mental Health Association of Hawaii, the University of Puget Sound National Alumni Board and the Japanese American Citizens League. He also served as an adjunct faculty member at the University of Hawaii at Manoa, where he taught research and public policy in the Honors Program. He also served on the American Bar Association's Council on Individual Rights & Responsibilities, and the national boards of Leadership Education for Asian Pacifics (LEAP) and Asian Pacific Islander American Vote, a national nonpartisan civic engagement organization.

Recognition

- *Best Lawyers in America 2009-present*: Ranked in Government Relations and as Hawai'i Government Relations Lawyer of the Year in 2014 and 2017.
- *Honolulu Magazine 2009-present*: Ranked among Best Lawyers in Hawai'i for Government Relations.
- US Department of Justice Attorney General: Received the department's Award for Public Service.
- ACLU of Hawaii: Received the Alan Saunders Award for Achievements in Civil Liberties.
- Japanese American Citizens League: Named as National JACLER of the Biennium.
- Japanese American Citizens League: Received the Honolulu Chapter's Distinguished Service Award.
- National Asian Pacific American Bar: Received the Association Trailblazer Award.
- CORO Foundation: Recognized through Fellowship in Public Affairs.
- University of Puget Sound: Recipient of an Honorary Doctor of Laws Degree (LL.D).

Activities and Affiliations

- Board member, Leadership Education for Asian Pacifics (LEAP)
- Board member, Hawai'i Institute for Public Affairs
- Board member, Japanese Cultural Center of Hawaii
- Campaign manager and transition director for Governor Neil Abercrombie (2010–2011)
- Hawaii Institute for Public Affairs
 - Founder, president and CEO
- Japanese American Citizens League
 - National vice president (1990–1994)
 - Honolulu chapter president (1990–1993)
- US-Japan Council
- Olelo Community Television
- Hawai'i State Bar Association
- American Bar Association
- National Asian Pacific American Bar Association

Areas of focus

Practices

- Corporate
- Public Policy and Regulation

- Advocacy and Government Affairs
- US Policy
- Public Finance

Industry sectors

- Government
- State, Regional, Provincial, Municipal and Local Government Bodies

Education

- Columbus School of Law, The Catholic University of America, JD
- University of Puget Sound, BA

Admissions and qualifications

- Hawai`i
- US District Court for the District of Hawai`i

Languages

- English