



Anita R. Estell
Polsinelli, Shalton, Flanigan and Suelthaus PC

Anita R. Estell has recently joined Polsinelli Shalton Flanigan Suelthaus as a shareholder. She is considered a pioneer in the Washington, DC lobbying community and in 1993 joined Van Scoyoc Associates as the first African American woman partner to be hired by a major independent lobbying firm. Estell stated that “breaking new ground for African-American women in lobbying was not easy. But the field of government relations has become much more diverse and she does not mind being the first and believes that the community as a whole has changed and evolved and so she is very please to have been a part of the growth.”

Estell is responsible for client development and managing annually more than \$1 billion in project requests for municipalities, state agencies, transportation systems, urban school districts, corporate entities, the nation’s predominantly and Historically Black Colleges and Universities, other institutions of higher education, national coalitions, and some small not-for-profits. Duties include interfacing with high-ranking Administration officials and staff, Members of Congress and their staff; researching, drafting and submission of legislative/appropriations recommendations, colloquies, white papers, and testimony; and orchestrating necessary Hill, White House and agency contacts. Areas of expertise include appropriations generally, with a focus on issues related to community development, criminal justice, defense, education (elementary, secondary and higher ed), environment, minority health, HIV/AIDS, homeland security, international development, science and technology, transportation, and federal contracting/grant opportunities. Other strengths include facilitation of public/private collaborative and grassroots advocacy.

She is a former Clinton appointee serving as Chief of Staff to Dr. Johnnetta Cole on the Clinton/Gore Transition Team and as a Senior Advisor to Secretary Richard Riley of the U.S. Department of Education. While at the Department of Education, Estell coordinated the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act and the reauthorization of the Office of Education Research and Improvement. She also worked closely with the White House on several initiatives, including the Drug-Free/Safe Schools and Empowerment Zone proposals.

Prior to working with the Clinton Administration, Ms. Estell served on the House Appropriations Committee. She was appointed to that position in 1987 by Representative Louis Stokes (D-OH) and served five years. In that capacity, Ms Estell monitored and managed the VA-HUD-Independent Agencies and Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations bills, as well as other legislative initiatives related to the budget and national security. Her portfolio included responsibility for more than \$1 trillion in federal programs cutting across the federal spectrum.

In addition to her experience in Congress and with the Clinton Administration, Ms. Estell spent her early years as an attorney practicing communications law at Gage & Tucker in Kansas City, Missouri, and the National Association of Broadcasters, located in Washington, DC. She gained extensive experience in managing cases related to telecommunications policy, contract

negotiation, minority ownership and First Amendment issues. Prior to becoming an attorney, Estell worked as a reporter and anchor in both television and radio.

Her civic involvement has included co-founding a number of non-profit advocacy and philanthropic organizations, and serving on the Rainbow/PUSH HIV/AIDS Advisory Board, LIFEbeat, The Music Industry Fights AIDS Advisory Board, the Board of Directors for the Constituency for Africa, the National Museum of Women's History, the American Civil Liberties Union (DC Affiliate), the African American Women's Fund, and the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation Spouses Scholarship Fund. She has provided pro bono consulting to a number of organizations, including the Rosa and Raymond Parks Institute and the Mark Twain Museum. Estell's *Political Watch* column appears regularly in Turning Point Magazine.

She received her Journalism and Law degrees from the University of Missouri-Columbia.