

Access to Experts



Wesley Bizzell

Assistant General Counsel and Director of Political Law and Ethics Programs
Altria Client Services Inc.

Wesley Bizzell serves as Assistant General Counsel, External Affairs and Director of Political Law and Ethics Programs for Altria Client Services LLC (“ALCS”). Mr. Bizzell provides in-house legal counsel on matters relating to the political, legislative, and lobbying activities of Altria Group, Inc., its services companies, including ALCS, and its operating companies, including Philip Morris USA Inc., U.S. Smokeless Tobacco Co. LLC, John Middleton Co., and Ste. Michelle Wine Estates Ltd.

In this role, Mr. Bizzell is responsible for ensuring that Altria and its companies comply with all laws and regulations regarding federal, state, local, and international campaign finance, government ethics, gifts to government officials, lobbying disclosure and reporting, and charitable giving. Overseeing a comprehensive compliance system covering the regulation of government affairs, Mr. Bizzell provides advice and guidance on political law compliance for more than 75 jurisdictions. Mr. Bizzell also heads the legal team that supports Altria’s public policy activities, providing services related to legislative and regulatory drafting and interpretation. Mr. Bizzell is a member of Altria’s Compliance Leadership Team and its Anti-Corruption Compliance Working Group.

Mr. Bizzell is an authority on political compliance law and is active in the compliance legal community. He is co-chair of the Conference Board’s Committee on Corporate Political Spending, a committee of leading American corporations dedicated to accountability, education, and engagement on issues of corporate political activity. In addition, he is a faculty member for the Practising Law Institute’s annual Corporate Political Activities conference. He serves on the Publications Committee and is co-chair of the Conference Committee for the Council on Governmental Ethics Laws (“COGEL”), a professional organization of government officials with responsibilities or interests in governmental ethics, elections, campaign finance, and lobby laws. He also is a member of the California Political Attorneys Association.

Mr. Bizzell has lectured on political compliance law issues at many venues, including the Society of Corporate Compliance and Ethics’ Corporate Compliance Institute, the Conference Board’s Symposium on Corporate Political Spending, the COGEL Annual Conference, the annual Heartland Governmental Ethics Conference, the American Conference Institute’s National Forum on Corporate Lobbying and Political Activities, and the Practising Law Institute’s annual Corporate Political Activities conference. He has also conducted numerous webinars on political law issues for the Public Affairs Council, the Conference Board, the Society of Corporate Compliance and Ethics, and other entities. Mr. Bizzell’s articles on the topics of political compliance law and lobbying have appeared in Corporate Counsel, Corrections Today, American Jails, the COGEL Guardian, Corrections.Com, and Metropolitan Corporate Counsel.

Previously, Mr. Bizzell was an attorney in Winston & Strawn LLP’s Federal Government Relations and Regulatory Affairs Practice Group. His career also includes more than six years on Capitol Hill, where he served as an aide to Arkansas Senators David Pryor and Dale Bumpers and handled matters involving the Federal Bureau of Prisons, Social Security Administration, Department of Education, and Department of Labor. Additionally, he has served in the Office of General Counsel and the Privatization and Special Projects Branch of the Federal Bureau of Prisons, Department of Justice, where he focused on a myriad of issues involving privatization and government procurement.

While at Winston & Strawn, Mr. Bizzell provided significant representation on political compliance, government affairs, legislative, and regulatory matters to Fortune 500 companies in the corrections, automotive, banking, pharmaceutical, agricultural, and technology-oriented industries, as well as trade associations, non-profit organizations, and local and territorial governments. He has served as outside ethics counsel to the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission, provided legal counsel to the election campaigns of gubernatorial and congressional candidates, represented corporate clients in enforcement actions before the Federal Election Commission, and conducted internal investigations related to corporate political activities.

Mr. Bizzell is extremely active in promoting diversity and inclusion within the legal and corporate communities. He is a member of the Altria Law Department’s Diversity Committee, was a co-founder of and serves on the steering committee for Altria’s LGBT Employee Resource Group, and is a board member for the National LGBT Bar Foundation. In addition, Mr. Bizzell volunteers as a mentor for the Leadership Council on Legal Diversity’s (“LCLD”) Law School Mentoring Program and was selected as a 2014 LCLD Fellow. He has spoken on diversity issues at many venues, including the International Bar Association.

Mr. Bizzell graduated with a B.A. in justice, magna cum laude, from the American University in Washington, D.C. and received a Master of Social Work with a focus in public policy from the Catholic University of America. He received his J.D., magna cum laude, from Georgetown University Law Center, where he was elected to the Order of the Coif and served as an editor for the Georgetown Law

Journal. He was a member of the inaugural class of the Stanford Graduate School of Business' LGBTQ Executive Leadership Program. He is a member of the Maryland and District of Columbia bars.

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