



Robert T. Farley

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BIOGRAPHY

Robert T. Farley was born in March 1962 in Syracuse, New York. He graduated with honors from Niskayuna High School, in Schenectady, New York in 1980. In 1984 he received a Bachelor of Arts degree, Magna Cum Laude, from the State University of New York at Albany. In 1987, he graduated from Hofstra University School of Law, receiving a Juris Doctor degree. In 2010 he graduated from Albany Law School, Summa Cum Laude, first in his class, receiving a post doctorate L.L.M. Degree (Masters of Laws and Letters). Mr. Farley's scholastic honors include service as the Associate Editor of the prestigious Hofstra Labor Law Journal, a student justice of the Moot Court Board, and a twice elected member of the SUNY University Senate. He was also the recipient of the Hofstra Distinguished Service Award and the Niskayuna Medal of Excellence.

Upon graduation from law school in 1987, Robert Farley began his legal career as a litigation attorney with the distinguished Albany law firm of McNamee, Lochner, Titus and Williams, P.C. He was admitted to practice law in New York State in January of 1988, and before the Federal Courts of the United States in February of 1988. As a litigator, Mr. Farley represented such prestigious clients as ConRail, Amtrak, U-Haul, DuPont and the American Red Cross.

In February of 1991, M r. Farley was appointed to serve as a counsel to the Assembly Minority Leader Clarence Rappleyea. Concurrently, he also helped found, and served as managing partner of, the Schenectady law firm of Farley and Farley. As an Assembly Counsel, Robert Farley served as the Republican Counsel to the Assembly Committees on: Banks, Insurance, Commerce, Small Business, and Labor, and the Task Force on Reapportionment.

In November 1993, M r. Farley ran for, and defeated an incumbent to win, election to the Schenectady County Legislature. In doing so, he received more votes than any other candidate running in Schenectady County. During his first term on the legislature, he served as chairman of the Standing Committee on Education, Economic Development and Planning, as well as the chairman of Special Committee on Government Access. He also served as a commissioner of the Capital District Regional Planning Commission and as a board member of the Schenectady Economic Development Corporation.

At the age of 32, in January 1995, Robert Farley was appointed by Attorney General Dennis Vacco, to serve as Deputy Attorney General for the State of New York. One of the youngest people in state history to ever hold the office of Deputy Attorney General, during his tenure, Deputy AG Farley headed the Department of Law's Intergovernmental Relations and Legislative Affairs Division, drafted over one hundred AG Program bills, and served as a member of the Attorney General's executive committee as well as representative to the New York State Law Enforcement Council.

In May of 1996, Robert Farley was asked to return to the state legislature, as a senior counsel to the NYS Senate Committee on Housing, Construction and Community Development. In that role, Mr. Farley helped to draft the most historic changes ever made to the rent regulation statute, (an issue that directly impacted over 4 million people) and also assisted in the modernization of and update of the state's fire prevention and building code.

Seeking a way to once again serve his community, in January 1997, Robert Farley accepted a unanimous, bipartisan appointment to fill a vacancy as the 3rd District's Representative to the Schenectady County Legislature. Upon his appointment, he was subsequently selected to chair the Standing Committee on Human Resources and the Special Committee for Charter Revision. In November of 1997, pursuant to his previous appointment, Robert Farley sought election to the county legislature, and once again led the ticket, receiving more votes than any other Republican candidate running in the entire County.

Following his election, in January 1998, despite being a member with little seniority, he was appointed to serve as chairman of the prestigious Standing Committee on Rules. Later that year he became the prime sponsor and principal author of the historic state and local legislation that established the Schenectady Metroplex. This entity, envisioned and created by Bob Farley's leadership, has been credited for Schenectady's economic revitalization.

In January of 1999, with a number of large civil service and pension reform issues rising to the political surface, Robert Farley was asked to take on a new challenge for the New York State Senate, and serve as the Chief Counsel for the highly prestigious NYS Senate Committee on Civil Service and Pensions. As Chief Counsel to the Committee, Mr. Farley helped to craft several important changes in this area, including the development of pension tier reform, the enactment of a pension cost of living adjustment for the first time in New York State history, a major veterans pension buy back program, the institution of a new type of early retirement program, laws to benefit victims and service personnel involved in the September 11, 2001 terrorist attack on the World Trade Center, and numerous other state legislative acts to protect the solvency of the state's nine public pension systems.

After again winning re-election to, and leading the ticket for, the Schenectady County Legislature, in November 1999, Robert Farley was elected by his colleagues to become Chairman of the Schenectady County Legislature, once again being one of the youngest persons ever to serve in that office. As Chairman, Mr. Farley made economic development, public safety and improving community quality of life assets (such as parks, libraries and museums) his top priorities. In doing so, he proved to be one of the most successful persons ever to hold the office. An activist Chairman, he professionalized the demeanor of the Legislature, updated its Rules, enacted sweeping reforms, and led the way for the rebirth of his community.

Under Robert Farley's leadership as Chairman, Schenectady County created new business opportunities and landed new office buildings with hundreds of jobs; supported public safety by establishing a Sheriff's Road Patrol and a new County Law Enforcement Council; and assisted libraries and parks, such as promoting Schenectady's Little Italy Project, expanding the County Library system, constructing a new Glenville baseball facility, reinstating an annual air show, and renovating the downtown Schenectady Veteran's Park. Making government do more with less, Robert Farley always kept taxpayers as his top priority, and despite many state mandates, actually reduced Real Property Taxes during his term. He was the first chair to do so in nearly two decades.

In January 2003, Robert Farley, was appointed Chief Counsel to the NYS Senate Committee on Corporations, Authorities and Commissions. The Committee, with Mr. Farley's help, was able to enact legislation, to restore public confidence in for profit and not for profit corporations, and public authorities. This legislation included the acclaimed Public Authority Reform Act of 2005, the Homestead Protection Act, and the Not for Profit Dissolution Improvement Act.

In 2007, Robert Farley was asked to take on a new position, as Chief Counsel to the NYS Senate Committee on Veterans, Homeland Security and Military Affairs. In such role, the Committee commenced an active effort to improve and expand the care of veterans, passing dozens of historic initiatives, including a new combat veteran tuition assistance program, expanded health insurance for national guard members, as well as several homeland security issues to promote public safety, increase border protection, improve statewide communications, expand government and business continuity, provide for state and local preparedness and recovery plans, and heighten waterfront and port security.

Recognized as a legal scholar as well as a practitioner, in January 2007, Robert Farley was appointed as an Adjunct Professor of Law at the State University of New York at Albany. As a professor, Dr. Farley's classes have become among the most highly sought after at the University, and he has been regularly rated as among its finest professors. In addition to his recognition as an outstanding classroom teacher, Dr. Farley is also the author of several scholarly works of highly respected legal commentary.

In January 2011, Mr. Farley was appointed by the Senate Majority Leader to serve as a Senior Supervisory Counsel to the Senate Majority. Working in such role he has served as Committee Counsel to the Senate Committees on Finance; Banks; Consumer Protection; Corporations, Commissions and Authorities; Cities; Education; Higher Education; Insurance; Investigations; Local Government; and Veterans, Homeland Security and Military Affairs.

In January 2019, Mr. Farley was appointed by Republican Conference Leader, Senator John Flanagan, as Senior Counsel with the Republican Conference. During his three decades of public service, Robert Farley has been regarded as one of the leading legal minds in all of state government.

In February 2021, Robert Farley retired from his position as Senior Counsel in the New York State Senate, and on March 2, 2021, he was presented with the unusual and distinguished honor, of the passage of a Senate Resolution J425, recognizing his distinguished and extraordinary service to New York State. The resolution, unanimously supported and adopted by every member of the New York State Senate, both Republicans and Democrats alike, was sponsored by every member of the Republican Senate Conference.

Mr. Farley remains as a member of the faculty at the State University of New York at Albany. He also continues to serve as a partner in his family Law Firm, and as of January 1, 2023, has accepted an appointment to serve as General Counsel with the New York Insurance Association – NYIA.

During his work in both the public and private sectors, he has gained an impressive reputation as a state recognized expert in the fields of state and local governmental policy, procedure and operations, criminal justice, homeland security, corporations, insurance and elections. Robert Farley lives with his family at their home in Scotia, New York.