

Steve Elmendorf



Steve Elmendorf served as a senior advisor to House Democratic Leader Dick Gephardt for 12 years, navigating the intersection of politics and public policy. As chief of staff and most senior Democratic aide in the House of Representatives, Elmendorf interacted daily with the White House, administration officials, members of Congress, senators and leading interest groups developing knowledge in economic, domestic, national security, and foreign policy.

Elmendorf managed the floor for House Democrats and designed the Democratic Caucus' strategic response to crises including the impeachment of a sitting president and terrorist attacks on the United States. Elmendorf was also deeply involved in every major legislative initiative considered during his tenure including the Clinton 1993 economic program, the Clinton effort to reform health care in 1994, NAFTA, the 1997 Balanced Budget Act, McCain-Feingold campaign finance reform and the Iraq war resolution.

Elmendorf managed four of Gephardt's successful campaigns for Democratic leader and organized Gephardt's outside political activities at the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee and at his leadership political action committee. He was elected by the members of the House of Representatives as a minority officer in the House in the 105th, 106th, and 107th Congress.

After serving as chief of staff and senior advisor for Gephardt's 2004 Democratic presidential campaign, Elmendorf served as deputy campaign manager for Sen. John Kerry's 2004 presidential bid. In that capacity, Elmendorf served as the primary campaign liaison to U.S. Senators, members of Congress, governors, and mayors. He also supervised the field operations in 21 battleground states and was a senior member of the strategic team involved in overall campaign planning. Elmendorf was a key player in the campaign's outreach to constituency groups and organized labor.

While in the leader's office, he was named every year by Roll Call newspaper as one of the 50 most powerful staff people on Capitol Hill. In the New York Times, a fellow strategist described Elmendorf as "one of the best operatives and thinkers in the party," and Roll Call newspaper named Elmendorf "as well rounded as anyone in the business, especially in his ability to move from one discipline to another without missing a beat."

Prior to his service in the House leadership, Elmendorf was chief of staff to Rep. Dennis Eckart, a senior member of the House Energy and Commerce Committee. He also served in the U.S. Senate as executive assistant to Sen. Brock Adams. Elmendorf began his career as a field organizer on the Mondale for President campaign after graduating from Trinity College in Hartford, Conn. Elmendorf has been a frequent guest on television talk shows including Hardball, CNBC's Capitol Report, Fox News and CNN's Crossfire. He has lectured at the Institute of Politics at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government and at Trinity College.