Trevor Potter

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Trevor Potter is a former Commissioner and Chairman of the Federal Election Commission. He leads the political law practice at the Washington firm of Caplin & Drysdale. In addition, he is the founder and President of the Campaign Legal Center, a non-profit nonpartisan 501(c)(3) organization which works to defend and improve our democracy.

Mr. Potter has been described by the American Bar Association Journal as “hands-down one of the top lawyers in the country on the delicate intersection of politics, law and money.”

Mr. Potter is a frequent public speaker on campaign finance and election law topics, and gave the 2016 July 4th address at the Chautauqua Institution. He is perhaps best known to the public for his appearances on the Colbert Report as the lawyer for Stephen Colbert’s SuperPAC, Americans for a Better Tomorrow, Tomorrow, during the 2012 election.

A Republican, he was appointed to the FEC in 1991 by President George H.W. Bush, and then served as general counsel to John McCain’s 2000 and 2008 presidential campaigns. He was a member of the legal team that successfully defended the McCain-Feingold reform law in the Supreme Court, prior to the Citizens United decision.

A nonresident Senior Fellow in Governance Studies at the Brookings Institution, he has also taught campaign finance law at the University of Virginia School of Law and Oxford University. He serves on the American Bar Association’s Standing Committee on Election Law and is a Member of the American Law Institute.

Mr. Potter is a graduate of Harvard College and the University of Virginia School of Law.