

Michael Best Strategies: Ted Kanavas, Former State Senator and Co-Founder Of Michael Best Strategies, Dies at 56

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Madison, WI – Theodore (Ted) J. Kanavas, former Wisconsin State Senator and Co-founder of Michael Best Strategies, passed away today in the company of his family after a hard-fought battle to cancer, it was announced by Strategies President Robert Marchant on behalf of the family. Kanavas was 56.

“Ted was a tremendous business partner and leader,” Marchant said, “but more than anything, he was a great man. He cared deeply about those close to him and always treated people with dignity and respect. I am grateful for the opportunity to have worked with him both in the Senate and here at Strategies, and I will miss him dearly.”

Kanavas, a former aide to Wisconsin Congressman Jim Sensenbrenner, served Wisconsin’s 33rd Senate district from 2001 to 2010. During his tenure, Ted was a champion of economic development and technological issues, and authored the Angel Investment Tax Credit Act.

In 2014, Kanavas co-founded Michael Best Strategies, a government relations and public policy firm affiliated with nationally renowned law firm Michael Best &

Friedrich, with David Krutz.

“I am tremendously saddened with Ted’s passing,” Krutz said in today’s announcement. “Ted was a natural leader who brought tremendous energy, vision and creativity to everything he felt passionate about. I was sold on his vision for Michael Best Strategies from the first time he shared it with me four years ago. We will always cherish his enthusiasm, political wisdom and friendship.”

Kanavas was raised in Brookfield, WI, and graduated from the University of Wisconsin – Madison. He attended Pepperdine Law School before launching a successful private sector career in the software industry. In 2005, Government Technology Magazine named him among the “Top 25 Doers, Dreamers and Drivers.”

Former Wisconsin Governor Tommy Thompson said in a statement, “Ted’s passing comes too soon. His endless passion and energy for recognizing, engaging, and solving public problems, both as an elected official and a private citizen, made him remarkable. Ted loved life, his family, and the State of Wisconsin. We shared a commitment to public service and hope for a better future for our state and nation. Ted knew tomorrow can always be better than today. His life revealed and demonstrated this hope. I will miss my friend. My family can only share our sympathy at this difficult time and thank Ted’s for sharing him with all of us.”

Kanavas resided in Brookfield with his wife, Mary. They have 3 children.

In recent years, Ted was a frequent guest host on Milwaukee’s WISN radio, and co-hosted the WisOpinion.com web show, “The Insiders.”

Last week, Kanavas was named Chairman of Michael Best Strategies. Marchant succeeds him as the firm’s President.

About Michael Best Strategies

Michael Best Strategies focuses on achieving clients’ objectives through unparalleled strategy development and deployment for implementation, pragmatic guidance on public policy development, and government relations. The Strategies team specializes in a full range of services, including government relations, public policy consulting, grassroots advocacy, public affairs, conference planning, and strategic political relationships. For more information, visit

michaelbeststrategies.com.

About Michael Best & Friedrich LLP

Michael Best is a leading law firm, providing a full range of legal services to clients on a local, regional, national, and global basis. The firm has more than 220 attorneys in Milwaukee, Madison, Waukesha and Manitowoc, Wisconsin; Chicago, Illinois; Salt Lake City, Utah; Washington, D.C.; and Austin, Texas. Michael Best's main areas of practice include: intellectual property, labor and employment relations (including employee benefits), litigation, and transactional (including corporate, tax, real estate/project development and financing, and wealth planning). For more information, visit michaelbest.com.