

Cozen O'Connor Public Strategies adds Habitat for Humanity Vice President Katrell Lewis to its New York Practice

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NEW YORK – January 23, 2023 – Cozen O'Connor Public Strategies has added Katrell Lewis — formerly vice president of government and community partnerships for Habitat for Humanity in New York City and Westchester County — to its New York office.

Lewis, who joins as a principal, will manage and advance client priorities in Albany and New York City. Lewis has played a leading role in addressing some of the most complex issues impacting New York, particularly with regard to the myriad challenges related to the planning, financing, and production of affordable housing. He brings to Cozen O'Connor Public Strategies a proven track record of building consensus with legislators, government agencies, and community stakeholders to accomplish his clients' goals.

"Real estate is critically important to New York's economy and drives most of its politics," said Howard Schweitzer, CEO of Cozen O'Connor Public Strategies. "Adding Katrell to our team is a major win for not only our public strategies clients but Cozen O'Connor's land use clients. His legislative expertise and deep connections in the statewide housing and development community will enhance our practice substantially."

"Both Governor Hochul and Mayor Adams have prioritized housing and development, but New York's many legal and regulatory challenges continue to stand in the way," said Katie Schwab, Co-Chair of Cozen O'Connor Public Strategies New York. "Katrell's expertise, and his reputation as a bridge-builder, make him a tremendous resource for our clients who are seeking to overcome those obstacles through legislative change, community engagement, and any number of other timely and resourceful approaches."

"Katrell's background as a nonprofit leader also makes him uniquely qualified to support and advise our many nonprofit clients," said Rose Christ, Co-Chair of Cozen O'Connor Public Strategies New York. "He's proven that he knows how to navigate through the budget and regulatory challenges and get important projects across the finish line. I am thrilled he's chosen to join us and happy to welcome him aboard."

Lewis's legislative work in Albany has impacted virtually every corner of the state. He recently led, for example, a statewide coalition that increased the 2023 fiscal budget for the Affordable Housing Corp. (AHC) — a state-funded grant program that subsidizes homeownership statewide — to \$36 million from \$26 million, where it had been since the program's inception in 1985. Further, Lewis helped secure a pool of \$400 million in affordable homeownership funding for the AHC's parent, the Division of Housing and Community Renewal. In 2019, he helped spearhead the unanimous, bipartisan passage of a bill increasing the AHC's per-home subsidy from \$45,000 to \$75,000 in high-cost markets like New York City.

In 2022, Lewis was named to the annual "40 under 40" list published by *Crain's New York Business* — recognizing his work with Habitat for Humanity, the global nonprofit that develops affordable homeownership for low-to-moderate income Americans. A Brooklyn native and resident, Lewis's efforts have also positively impacted his hometown. He was directly involved, for example, in the recent creation of 485 homeownership units and 123 units of affordable LGBTQ senior housing in New York City.

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“I’ve always worked directly and closely with my constituent groups, meeting and speaking with them, while also building relationships at every level of city and state government,” Lewis said. “With Cozen O’Connor Public Strategies, I’ll have access to all of Cozen O’Connor’s legal resources, which will greatly benefit clients here in New York City, as well as Albany. I’m thrilled to be here, and I look forward to meeting and working with my new colleagues.”

Lewis earned his MPA at The City University of New York, Baruch College Marxe School of Public and International Affairs, and his BA in political science at The City University of New York, College of Staten Island.

About Cozen O’Connor Public Strategies

Cozen O’Connor Public Strategies, an affiliate of the international law firm Cozen O’Connor, is a bipartisan government relations practice representing clients before the federal government and in cities and states throughout the country. With offices in Washington D.C., Chicago, Philadelphia, Harrisburg, Pittsburgh, New York City, Albany, Richmond, Minneapolis, and Santa Monica, the firm’s public strategies professionals offer a full complement of government affairs services, including legislative and executive branch advocacy, policy analysis, assistance with government procurement and funding programs, and strategic communications management. Its client base spans multiple industries, including health care, transportation, hospitality, education, construction, energy, real estate, entertainment, financial services, and insurance.

About Cozen O’Connor

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