



Congressman Tom Cole

Fourth District of Oklahoma

Currently serving in his eight term, Tom Cole was elected to Congress in 2002. He was identified as “one of the sharpest minds in the House,” by Time Magazine and “the hardest working Member of Congress,” by Newsmax. In 2017, Cole was inducted into the Oklahoma Hall of Fame.

In Congress, Cole is recognized as an advocate for taxpayers and small business, a proponent for a strong national defense and a leader in promoting biomedical research. He is considered the [foremost] expert in the House on issues dealing with Native Americans and tribal governments. The National Congress of the American Indian has cited Cole for distinguished service on three different occasions (2007, 2011 and 2017), more than any other Member of Congress in the history of the organization.

Since 2009, Cole has served on the powerful [House Appropriations Committee](#), where he chairs the [subcommittee](#) on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies. He also serves on the subcommittee for [Defense](#) and [Interior](#) appropriations. Cole represents the Appropriations Committee on the [House Budget Committee](#), serving as the senior Appropriator on the panel. In 2012, Cole was appointed by the Speaker of the House to serve on the [House Committee on Rules](#). In 2017, he was named Vice Chairman of the committee. Cole also serves as a Deputy Whip for the Republican Conference.

Tom Cole has a significant background of service to his home state of Oklahoma. He has served as the State Chairman of the Oklahoma Republican Party, District Director to former Congressman Mickey Edwards, a member of the Oklahoma State Senate and as Oklahoma’s Secretary of State. In this capacity, he served as former Governor Frank Keating’s chief legislative strategist and liaison to the state’s federal delegation. Keating tapped Cole to lead Oklahoma’s successful effort to secure federal funds to assist in the rebuilding of Oklahoma City in the wake of the bombing of the Alfred P. Murray Federal Building on April 19, 1995.

Cole is widely regarded as one of the GOP’s top political strategists. He served as the Executive Director of the National Republican Congressional Committee in the 1992 cycle. He also served as the Chief of Staff of the Republican National Committee during the historic 2000 cycle in which Republicans won the presidency, the Senate and the House for the first time in 48 years. In the 2008 cycle, Cole served as the Chairman of the National Republican Congressional Committee.

Cole is a founding partner and past president of CHS & Associates, a nationally recognized political consulting and survey research firm based in Oklahoma City. The firm has been named one of the top 20 in its field and has literally dozens of past and current clients scattered across the country.

A former college instructor in history and politics, Cole holds a B.A. from Grinnell College, a M.A. from Yale University and a Ph.D. from the University of Oklahoma. Cole has been a Thomas Watson Fellow and a Fulbright Fellow at the University of London. Tom has also received honorary degrees from Randall University, Oklahoma City University and Grinnell College. He serves on the Smithsonian Institution Board of Regents and the national board of the Fulbright Association. He is also a member of the Congressional Advisory Board to the Aspen Institute.

Tom Cole is a fifth generation Oklahoman and an enrolled member of the Chickasaw Nation. He is one of only two tribal members currently serving in Congress. He was inducted into the Chickasaw Hall of Fame in 2004. Cole’s late mother, Helen, is also a member of the Chickasaw Hall of Fame and served as a state representative, state senator and the Mayor of Moore in her native state of Oklahoma. Cole’s late father, John, served 20 years in the United State Air Force and worked an additional two decades as a civilian federal employee at Tinker Air Force Base.

Tom and his wife, Ellen, have one son, Mason, and reside in Moore, Oklahoma.