

**Morna A. Murray, J.D.**

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Member: CT, DC, and FL Bars

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## Professional Profile

Senior level attorney, policy expert and manager, with extensive background in public policy development, lobbying and advocacy in areas of health care, mental health, children's health, disabilities, and special education; state and federal policy analysis, and; adult training/facilitation.

- Positive, effective and collaborative leader and manager.
- Extensive expertise in health care, children's health, disabilities, special education, and positive youth development public policy, programs, and research.
- Skilled presenter, trainer and facilitator.
- Excellent oral and written communicator.
- Strongly committed to positive and effective advocacy for disadvantaged individuals.

## Employment History

**Vice President and Counsel**  
**First Focus, Washington, D.C.**

**2010 - 2012**

- Directed advocacy for national bipartisan organization on children's policy, including: children's health, disabilities, mental health, special education, and family economic security. Oversaw and assisted staff in all issue areas with legislative and direct advocacy efforts.
- Developed and drafted legislation for House and Senate members, and organizational priorities.
- Prepared reports, articles, blog posts on multiple children's policy issues.
- Served as top strategic advisor to the President and represented organization at national and state events.

**Special Counsel/Senior Counsel**  
**U.S. Senator Robert P. Casey, Jr. (D-PA)**

**2012**  
**2007 - 2010**

- 2012: Served as Senate special counsel for short-term state project on improving low income maternal and child health care.
- 2007-2010: Served as senior counsel and policy advisor to Senator Casey in health and children's issues including: health care and health care reform; children's health; disabilities; mental health; special education; and child welfare.
- Oversaw and drafted all legislative and policy initiatives in issue area portfolio.
- Prepared all briefing memos, talking points, and speeches for the Senator in conjunction with all national and state events in issue area portfolio.
- Served as top strategic advisor to the Senator and management team on issue areas.
- Served as spokesperson and representative at relevant national and state events.

**Director of Youth Development**

**Children's Defense Fund, Washington, D.C.**

**2003 – 2007**

- Directed top priority organizational project focused upon continuum of critical and interconnected issues in child well being, including children's health care, mental health care, early childhood, education, and special education.
- Managed diverse team of policy, research, communications and field outreach staff members.
- Served as a senior policy advisor to the president, providing briefing memos, strategic recommendations and talking points.
- Served as a public spokesperson at a variety of events including Congressional legislative caucuses, national conferences, hearings and press briefings.
- Coordinated and co-chaired national coalition of education and juvenile justice organizations; developed and coordinated joint lobbying strategies and efforts.

**Executive Director**

**Victims' Assistance Legal Organization, McLean, VA**

**1995 - 2003**

- Led diverse team of national leaders in public policy, direct service, government and academia. Oversaw all program development, budget and finances.
- Developed and provided national trainings and curricula for community-based and criminal and juvenile justice system professionals in all areas of victim assistance.
- Oversaw and conducted extensive research and writing in the areas of disabilities, child welfare, domestic violence, restorative justice, leadership and ethics.
- Designed and implemented annual media campaign to promote public awareness of crime victims and crime prevention public policy.

**Professor of Legal Studies**

**University of Hartford, Hartford, CT**

**1992 - 1995**

- Taught and advised undergraduate students for Legal Studies Bachelor of Science program.
- Courses included Introduction to law, Legal Philosophy, History of Law.
- Collaborated with Department Chair to create pilot program for degree programs combining interdisciplinary studies with Legal Studies program.

**Attorney**

**Heidgerd and Martin, P.A., Fort Lauderdale, FL**

**1987 - 1989**

- General practice in civil litigation, appellate work, abuse and neglect, and guardian ad litem proceedings. Specialized in legal opinions on state and federal legislation.

**Law Clerk**

**Honorable William J. Zloch, United States District Judge**

**1986 - 1987**

- Researched and wrote all court orders, final judgments and opinions on all pending matters in caseload. Extensive court experience.

**Legal Writer**

**The Association of Trial Lawyers of America, Washington, D.C.**

**1985 - 1986**

- Researched and prepared written analyses of case law for publication in the monthly American Trial Lawyers Association Law Reporter.

## **Professional/Community Activities**

**Board Member, Franciscan Mission Service**

**2011 - Present**

Serve as Board Member and legal counsel for Franciscan Mission Service, an international lay Franciscan mission program that helps individuals prepare for two-year missions to impoverished people and communities here in the U.S. as well as Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean.

**Connecticut Commission on Children**

**1992 - 1993**

Researched and developed recommendations regarding legal ramifications of proposed legislation involving state children's services and pending child welfare court cases.

**Guardian Ad Litem, 17<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit, Fort Lauderdale, FL**

**1988 - 1991**

State-certified Guardian Ad Litem for minor children in extended custody and dissolution proceedings involving child abuse and neglect. Interviewed and evaluated all relevant parties on behalf of the minor children. Provided recommendations to the court for proposed actions in the best interests of the minor children parties.

**Neighborhood Legal Services, Washington, D.C.**

**1985**

Legal intern for community legal services clinic for low-income city residents. Researched and drafted pleadings in divorce, adoption, landlord/tenant, and custody court proceedings. Extensive court experience and client interaction.

## **Publications**

- Regular contributor to Huffington Post on issues relevant to public policy on health care, disabilities, public policy: <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/morna-murray/>
- Online author for *National Catholic Reporter Today* on issues relevant to intersection of public policy/social justice: <http://ncronline.org/authors/morna-murray>
- *America's Cradle to Prison Pipeline Report* (Children's Defense Fund, October 2007)
- *The Cradle to Prison Pipeline Crisis* (Poverty and Race Research Action Council, *Poverty and Race*, July/August 2005)
- *Poverty and the Pipeline to Prison* (Children's Defense Fund, *The State of America's Children* 2005)
- *Juvenile Justice and Youth Development* (Children's Defense Fund, *The State of*

*America's Children 2004)*

- *National Victim Assistance Academy Text* (U.S. Department of Justice, Office for Victims of Crime, 1997-2002 editions)
- *Restitution Reform: The Coordinated Interagency Approach* (U.S. Department of Justice, Office for Victims of Crime, 1997)
- *National Crime Victims' Rights Week Resource Guide* (U.S. Department of Justice, Office for Victims of Crime, 1997-2001 volumes)
- *Leadership in Victim Services* (U.S. Department of Justice, Office for Victims of Crime, 2001)
- *The Ultimate Educator: Achieving Maximum Adult Learning Through Training and Instruction* (U.S. Department of Justice, Office for Victims of Crime, 2001)
- *Promising Practices in Restitution* (U.S. Department of Justice, Office for Victims of Crime, 2000)

## **Education**

### **Juris Doctor – 1986**

George Washington University National Law Center, Washington, D.C.

### **B.A. International Affairs – 1982**

Phi Beta Kappa

George Washington University, Washington, D.C.

## **Bar Memberships**

State of Connecticut

District of Columbia

State of Florida

## **References**

References are available upon request.