



Sarah M. Mercer
Senior Policy Advisor and Counsel

smercerc@bhfs.com
303.223.1139
Denver, Colorado
Las Vegas, Nevada

Sarah Mercer's creativity and work ethic paired with her legal expertise and passion for local and state government helps her develop successful legislative and regulatory solutions for her clients. Sarah's background as an elected city councilperson in Edgewater, Colorado, paired with her experience as an oil and gas litigator and counsel to former Colorado Supreme Court Chief Justice Michael Bender, have helped shape her policy practice at Brownstein.

Sarah's work on several high-profile policy matters demonstrates her leadership and skill in her field. She was one of the lead lobbyists who succeeded in persuading the Colorado General Assembly to authorize private equity investment in the provision of elder care on behalf of InnovAge, which resulted in the expansion of services to Colorado's seniors while allowing them to remain in their own homes. Sarah was also successful in the unanimous passage of state legislation which removed licensure requirements so that individuals can watch up to three pets in their homes without regulatory oversight and can more easily participate in the sharing economy through platforms like the firm's client Rover.com. Further, her advocacy on behalf of Smart Colorado, a local nonprofit that protects Colorado youth through marijuana regulation, resulted in legislation that prohibits edible marijuana in forms that can be confused with traditional candy and secured a \$9.2 million increase in funding for marijuana education in elementary, middle and high schools across the state.

Prior to joining the firm, Sarah litigated complex oil and gas cases at a boutique Denver firm before serving a special two-year appointment as counsel to the Colorado Supreme Court Chief Justice Michael Bender, playing a key role in decisions affecting the overall functioning and operation of Colorado's judicial branch of government. She also has experience in municipal policy and lawmaking having served on the Edgewater (Colorado) City Council, where she participated in drafting one of the state's first medical marijuana ordinances, crafting solutions to enhance city-provided trash and recycling services and reorganizing the city's financial department to improve collection of water and sewer usage fees.

Previous Experience

Counsel for the Honorable Michael Bender, Colorado Supreme Court

Litigation Associate, Welborn Sullivan Meck & Tooley, P.C.

Judicial Clerk for the Honorable Michael Bender, Colorado Supreme Court

Practices

Government Relations, Litigation, Political & Regulatory Law, State & Local Legislation & Policy

Representative Matters

- Brownstein drafted, submitted, and lobbied for SB 124, a bill that amends Nevada Revised Statute 463.302 and permits the relocation of a gaming establishment and transfer of the nonrestricted gaming license to a location within 1 mile of the existing location if the move and transfer are necessary because the existing establishment (1) is adjacent to a military installation; and (2) has been designated by the Federal Government as necessary for the expansion of the military installation. The Bill was passed by the Nevada legislature and subsequently signed by the Governor on May 20, 2015.
- On behalf of the City of Colorado Springs, secured \$9M for a new cybersecurity intelligence center in partnership with the University of Colorado and federal Department of Defense and amended legislation to reduce the regulatory burden on the City's Fire Department and EMS responders.
- On behalf of the American Resort Development Association and its 1,000 members ranging from privately held firms to publicly traded corporations, drafted, lobbied and passed legislation to expose and prevent fraudulent practices in the timeshare resale market. Worked with key industry stakeholders, legislators, the Governor's office, the Division of Real Estate, and the Consumer Protection Division of the Attorney General's Office to pass these sweeping reforms for the fractional ownership industry.
- On behalf of the trade association, CINEMA, spearheaded and successfully passed first-of-its-kind in the nation legislation to promote movie and television production in Colorado that had been attempted by other lobbying entities for the prior seven years without success. Since that time, worked with the Governor and Office of Economic Development and International Trade to secure over \$15M in funding for the movie and television rebate program. Recently secured \$5.3M in state funding for the rebate program which resulted in Quentin Tarantino choosing Telluride, Colorado as the location for directing his 8th feature film, The Hateful Eight.