

Rep. Jack Quinn joins lobbying giant Cassidy

By Josephine Hearn

Retiring Rep. Jack Quinn (R-N.Y.) is joining the lobbying world next year as president of top firm Cassidy & Associates, the Hill has learned. Quinn will join a leadership team at Cassidy that already includes firm founder Gerry Cassidy, Chief Executive Officer and former Rep. Marty Russo (D-Ill.) and Chief Operating Officer Gregg Hartley.

Quinn announced earlier this year that he would retire after representing the Buffalo area for 12 years.

He is one of a number of members planning to become lobbyists next year. Retiring Rep. Jim Greenwood (R-Pa.) will lead the Biotechnology Industry Organization, and Sen. Don Nickles (R-Okla.) announced last week that he is forming his own lobbying firm.

Quinn said in a telephone interview from his home in Buffalo that he had briefly considered other offers but that "Cassidy seemed to be a natural fit. I happen to have known people at Cassidy for a long time." Russo

plays basketball with Quinn, and Cassidy lobbyist Arthur Mason is a longtime friend.

In Congress, Quinn chaired the Railroad Subcommittee of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee and was a strong defender of Amtrak. He briefly considered an offer from the Bush administration to lead the Federal Railroad Administration, a House source said.

Quinn is the second prominent Republican to join Cassidy's leadership in the past two years. Hartley, a former chief of staff to House Majority Whip Roy Blunt (R-Mo.), came on board last year, joining Cassidy, a Democrat, and Russo.

"We've always had a Republican in [firm] leadership. ... Bringing Jack on continues that pattern," Cassidy said. "Jack is a gifted communicator who expresses himself very well, and we're in a business where you must be able to communicate ideas."

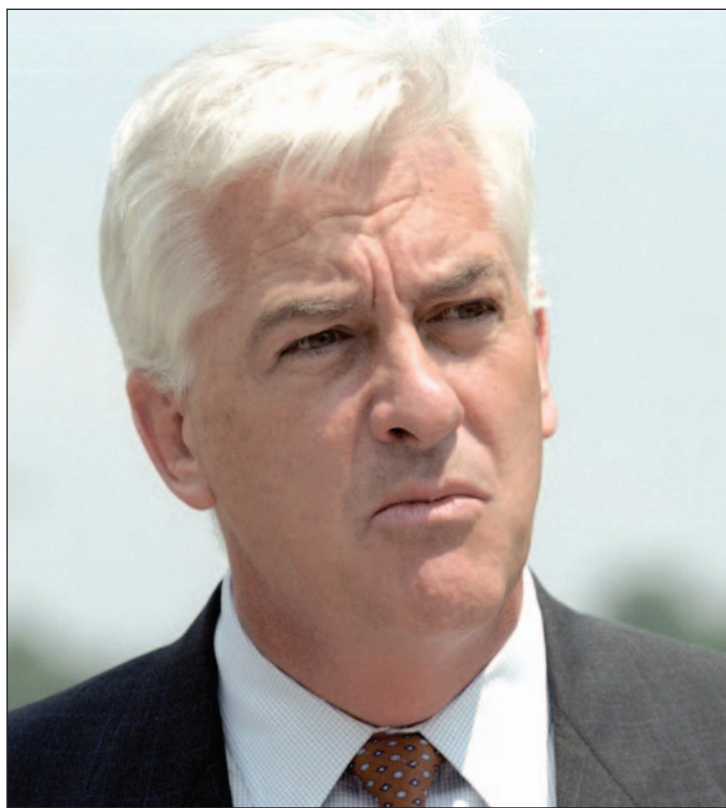
Cassidy noted that the firm had been hiring more Republicans in the past year in recognition of the fact that both the administration and Congress are controlled by Republicans. Of nine

lobbyists hired by the firm in the past year, eight have been Republicans. A year ago, the firm's lobbyists were split 50-50 between Democrats and Republicans. Cassidy said that now "well over 60 percent of our lobbyists here are Republicans." But he reiterated that "my philosophy is always to be bipartisan."

Cassidy & Associates is among the city's largest lobbying firms. In the first six months of this year, it took in \$14 million in lobbying revenue, falling just behind Patton Boggs and Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld. It was the first time in at least six years that Cassidy had not been either first or second in lobbying revenue.

Quinn brings to Cassidy a strong record on transportation, good relations with labor groups and a reputation for reaching across the aisle. He plans to use his first year at the firm — when he will be under a one-year lobbying ban — to learn the business and work on client development, he said.

He and his wife will move permanently into their condominium in Alexandria but do not plan to sell their house in Buffalo.



FILE PHOTO

Retiring Rep. Jack Quinn will join the leadership team at Cassidy.

Quinn said he had not ruled out another run for office at some point. "At the moment, we've got a great governor, the two Senate jobs are filled, so there aren't any openings. But politics change in a flash; anything could happen."

For now, Quinn can live out his political ambitions vicariously through his son, Jack III, who at 26 was elected the youngest

state representative in the New York state Legislature last month.

Jack III will be sworn in in Albany on Jan. 3, which was supposed to be his father's first day at the new job.

"I have to tell Gerry [Cassidy] that I'm taking a day off on the first day on the job. What a slacker, they're going to say!" Quinn joked.



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