

# National Journal

Friday, May 6, 2011

## That's a Great Point

Earlier this week, **Betsy Holahan** launched Great Point Strategies, a strategic communications consulting firm based in Alexandria, Va. She was most recently communications director for the Senate Budget Committee, a position she had held since 2005.

"Betsy's strength lies in translating complex policy issues into a clear and compelling message," said former Sen. Judd Gregg, R-N.H., who chaired the panel from 2005 to 2007. "She also has strong ties to the leading news media outlets, which is a key advantage in Washington. Betsy was an essential member of my staff because I could always rely on her to craft and deliver the right message to the right audience."

A native of Fairfield, Conn., Holahan attended Syracuse University, where she wrote for the *The Daily Orange*, a campus newspaper. While studying in London in the early '90s, she filed dispatches about bomb scares and other disruptions to civic life related to the Persian Gulf War. "I was their foreign correspondent from London," she joked.

After graduating, Holahan came to Washington, where her first job was waiting tables at Old Ebbitt Grill, across the street from the Treasury Department. In 1997, she was named press secretary for Sen. Pat Roberts, R-Kan. Four years after that, she arrived at the Treasury Department, where she served as a spokeswoman and senior public affairs adviser under former secretaries Paul O'Neill and John Snow. As a liaison to the press, Holahan balanced the interests of her employer with those of the pressroom.

"You walk a fine line between trying to do your job for [Treasury officials] and also trying to assist the reporters.... You always want to be as transparent as you can without divulging something that would be inappropriate."

Holahan, 41, is married to Eric Schmutz, an aide to Rep. Lynn Jenkins, R-Kan. The couple has two young children.

*Christopher Snow Hopkins*