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James Townsend

Director of the Levin Center

Biography

James H. (Jim) Townsend, a former member of the Michigan legislature, was named director of the Levin Center for Oversight and Democracy in November 2019.

Previously, Townsend practiced law in the Detroit office of Butzel as a member of its Corporate and Real Estate Practice Group.

Prior to joining the firm, he represented the 26th District in the Michigan House of Representatives. He serves on the Michigan Economic Development Corporation's advisory council of the Redevelopment Ready Communities® program.

Before his career in law, Townsend was legislative director in the office of U.S. Representative Nita M. Lowey and worked for U.S. Sen. Frank R. Lautenberg.

Townsend's private sector experience includes working as a brand manager at Ford Motor Company, founding and directing the Michigan Suburbs Alliance, and leading economic development at the Detroit Metro Convention & Visitors Bureau.

Townsend graduated from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, with Highest Honors in History, earned an M.B.A. and Master of Public Policy at the University of Michigan, and earned his J.D. (*cum laude*) at Wayne Law where he was elected to the Order of the Coif.

Degrees and Certifications

J.D., Wayne State

University Law School

M.B.A., University of Michigan

M.P.P., University of Michigan