

Cheryl A. Kraus

Associate

Albany

ckraus@farrellfritz.com

(518) 313-1450



Cheryl A. Kraus is a distinguished attorney, policy strategist, and advocate with over twenty years of experience in healthcare law, human services, and gender equity initiatives. Her work focuses on achieving clients' objectives through strategic policy development, stakeholder engagement, and robust government relations. She brings a proven track record of legislative advocacy, legal expertise, and coalition-building, ensuring that critical issues are addressed through innovative and transformative policy solutions.

With a Juris Doctor from the University at Buffalo School of Law, Cheryl applies her legal acumen to navigate the complexities of healthcare law and policy, championing health equity, innovation, and systemic change across multiple industries. Her approach integrates legal and legislative analysis with strategic communication, fostering collaboration with stakeholders, policymakers, and industry leaders to drive advocacy efforts with meaningful social impact.

Her diverse career includes working with corporations with a global reach, nonprofit organizations, and government entities, addressing issues related to healthcare access, quality, and affordability, workplace protections, and the rights of women, children, families, and people with disabilities. She regularly represents clients before the New York State Executive Chamber, the Legislature and regulatory agencies, guiding them through policy development, legislative drafting, and government affairs strategy. A recognized leader in legislative advocacy, Cheryl has played a key role in negotiating language for numerous healthcare-related bills, including legislation on gestational surrogacy and reproductive rights, domestic violence reforms and funding, adoptee rights, Medical Aid in Dying, and access to serious and terminal illness care benefits. Her advocacy has helped

PRACTICE AREAS

New York State Regulatory & Government Relations

Healthcare

Corporate

EDUCATION

University of Buffalo Law School, J.D.

Regents College

AFFILIATIONS AND APPOINTMENTS

- Senator Kirsten Gillibrand's Special Committee on Aging Workgroup to Develop a Federal Master Plan for Aging, Member
- Hospice Action Network, Federal Legislative Ambassador
- The New York State Medical Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment (MOLST) Program, Legislative Committee, Statewide Implementation Workgroup, Chair
- New York State Bar Association
 - Health Law Section, Committee on Legislation and Ethics, and Long-Term Care
 - Women in Law Section, Member
- National Alliance for Care at Home, Legislative Affairs Council, Member
- Save the River, Upper St. Lawrence Riverkeeper, Member
- Women's Bar Association of the State of New York
- Capital District Women's Bar Association

establish New York State as a leader in serious illness care policy.

Cheryl began her career at the New York State Office for People With Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD), where she advocated on behalf of individuals with disabilities across a range of settings, including community-based programs, group residences, and intermediate care facilities. She then served as the ADA/EEO Compliance Officer for a New York State Transportation Authority, ensuring compliance with disability rights laws in urban public transportation and implementing workplace training programs for 1,500 employees. Her leadership in economic and public health initiatives includes securing public and private support for a National Heritage Corridor, collaborating with 234 municipalities and 23 counties to promote economic development, cultural preservation, and community health improvements across Upstate New York.

During her tenure with the New York State Attorney General's Office, she played a key role in consumer protection and healthcare system reform, investigating systemic issues and facilitating dispute resolution between insurers, healthcare providers, and patients. Additionally, she has been a strong advocate for Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) and led the creation of a Leadership Development Initiative in Community Health, pioneering workforce development in rural not-for-profit healthcare organizations.

Her dedication to social justice and health equity is reflected in her active volunteer service with the New York State Bar Association, the Women's Bar Association, the National Hospice Action Network, and the Alliance for Care in the Home. She also serves as the legislative chair for the New York State Medical Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment (MOLST) Program implementation team, ensuring that patients' end-of-life care wishes are honored.

Cheryl's impact extends to the federal level, where she serves on the working group cultivated by U.S. Senator Kirsten Gillibrand to develop a federal Master Plan for Aging, addressing the challenges posed by the nation's rapidly growing aging population. She regularly engages with members of Congress, CMS and national stakeholders to support serious illness care policy agendas. She has also contributed to New York State's Master Plan for Aging, set to be implemented in 2025, advocating for policies that enable individuals to age with dignity and access essential services, and is on the planning and implementation team to develop a community-based palliative care benefit with caregiver supports in New York State.

As an Adjunct Professor, Cheryl has taught healthcare systems and policy, fostering interdisciplinary collaboration in law, medicine, and public policy.

She also completed advanced legal studies at the Institute for World Legal Problems at the University of Innsbruck, Austria, studying under a former U.S. Supreme Court Justice.

Through her legal acumen, policy leadership, and unwavering commitment to advocacy, Cheryl continues to drive meaningful change in government, healthcare, and human services, ensuring that policies promote equity, innovation, and lasting social impact. Her commitment to transformative policy solutions has earned her multiple professional distinctions, including recognition by Best Lawyers, City & State New York, and the University at Buffalo School of Law as one of the 10 most influential graduates in law and justice initiatives in 2025.

Experience

- Strategic Legislative Leadership – Served as the first Vice President of Government Affairs and Policy for the New York State Hospice and Palliative Care Association, where she successfully drafted and championed multiple bipartisan bills and policy initiatives, including the establishment of the Center for Hospice and Palliative Care at the New York State Department of Health, the first initiative of its kind in the nation, positioning New York as a national leader in the serious illness care space.
- Health Equity & Consumer Advocacy – Led statewide healthcare policy initiatives, including advancing workforce protections, expanding healthcare access, and advocating for historically marginalized and under resourced communities.
- Disability Rights & Workplace Protections – Spearheaded ADA compliance and workplace diversity, equity and inclusion programs, ensuring access and inclusion for thousands of individuals while training employees on legal and ethical compliance.
- Public-Private Development – Designed and implemented policy solutions supporting economic development, cultural preservation, and public health initiatives for a National Heritage Corridor in collaboration with the state, municipalities, nonprofits, and government agencies.
- Distinguished Legal Educator & Speaker – Recognized for expansive knowledge in healthcare law, legislative strategy, and social impact advocacy, frequently presenting at industry programs and conferences, and serving as a legal and policy consultant to local, state and national news media.

Recognition

- Best Lawyers, Ones to Watch in Government Relations
- City & State New York, “Above and Beyond” Honoree
- City & State New York, “Who’s Who in Government Relations”
- University at Buffalo School of Law, UB Law Impact Honoree