

## **TOM COLE**

### **Biographical Profile**

Tom Cole became the Representative for Oklahoma's Fourth Congressional District on November 6th, 2002. During his tenure in the House Cole has established himself as a strong voice for the conservative views and values of the Fourth District. Called "one of the sharpest minds in the House" by *Time Magazine*, Cole is an advocate for a strong national defense, a defender of the interests of small business and taxpayers, a proponent of education at all levels and a leader on issues dealing with Native Americans and tribal governments. Cole was named as one of "Five Freshmen to Watch" by Roll Call at the outset of his congressional career.

Cole was appointed to the House Appropriations Committee, a powerful spending committee, in early 2009. Cole has previously served on the Armed Services Committee, Natural Resources Committee, Rules Committee and Education and Workforce Committee. Cole serves as a Deputy Whip in the U.S. House. In this role he helps line up the votes needed to pass the legislative agenda of the House Republican Conference.

Cole recently served as Chairman of the National Republican Congressional Committee for two years. This made him a member of the House GOP Leadership. Although Cole completed his service as Chairman, he has remained on the GOP Steering Committee, a decision-making group responsible for assigning party members to standing committees in the House of Representatives. Cole also serves as Republican Co-Chairman of the Native American Caucus.

Cole has a significant background of service to his home state of Oklahoma. He has served as a District Director for former Congressman Mickey Edwards, a member of the Oklahoma State Senate, and as Oklahoma's Secretary of State. In this capacity he served as former Governor Frank Keating's chief legislative strategist and liaison to the state's federal delegation. Keating tapped Cole to lead Oklahoma's successful effort to secure federal funds to assist in the rebuilding of Oklahoma City in the wake of the bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building on April 19th, 1995.

Cole is a founding partner and past president of CHS & Associates, a nationally recognized consulting and survey research firm based in Oklahoma City. The firm has been named one of the top twenty in its field in America and has literally dozens of past and current clients scattered across the country.

A former college instructor in history and politics, Cole holds a B.A. from Grinnell College, an M.A. from Yale University, and a Ph.D. from the University of Oklahoma. Cole has been a Thomas Watson Fellow and a Fulbright Fellow at the University of London. He currently serves on the national Board of the Fulbright Association. He also serves on the board of the Aspen Institute.

Tom Cole is a fifth generation Oklahoman and an enrolled member of the Chickasaw Nation. He is currently the only Native American serving in Congress. He was awarded

the Congressional Leadership award by the National Congress of American Indians and was inducted in the Chickasaw Hall of Fame in 2004. Cole's late mother, Helen, is also a member of the Chickasaw Hall of Fame and served as a state representative, state senator and Mayor of Moore in her native state of Oklahoma. Cole's late father, John, served twenty years in the United States Air Force and worked an additional two decades as a civilian federal employee at Tinker Air Force Base. Tom and his wife Ellen, have one son, Mason, and reside in Moore, Oklahoma.