

Benesch Government Relations Manager Rachel Winder Named a 2025 Women of Influence by Columbus Business First

MAY 21, 2025

Benesch is pleased to announce that Government Relations Manager Rachel Winder has been selected as one of Columbus Business First's Women of Influence honorees for 2025 in the Community Champion category. Honorees in this category excel in their private-sector careers while dedicating significant time, energy and resources to meaningful community causes.

Rachel has been recognized for her impactful contributions, leveraging her knowledge to advance economic opportunities, champion public policy initiatives and foster lasting change for businesses and entrepreneurs across Ohio. Notably, during the past few years, Rachel spearheaded and successfully advocated for the [passage of HB 531, "Braden's Law,"](#) criminalizing Sextortion (sexual extortion) in Ohio.

"Rachel is a champion in every sense of the word," said Benesch Government Relations Practice Group Chair Rob Zimmerman. "She is a tireless advocate for her clients, a role model and a wonderful human being."

The Women of Influence program recognizes women who significantly impact their organizations, contribute to the community through philanthropy and mentor the next generation of leaders. Honorees are recognized across six categories: Entrepreneurs, Trailblazers, Mentors, Nonprofit Leaders, Rising Stars and Community Champions.

With over three decades of experience in Ohio's local and state government, Rachel has been a driving force in shaping public policy and economic growth for businesses. She has secured millions in funding through government programs, contracts and economic development incentives while crafting policies that position her clients for success.

Passionate about empowering women-owned businesses, Rachel spearheaded Ohio's first Women-Owned Business Enterprise Certification Program and founded the Ohio Women's Coalition, leading efforts to establish a \$10 million women-owned business loan fund and a micro-loan program for women and minority entrepreneurs.

Rachel's leadership in government relations extends to Fortune 50 companies and roles with Ohio's Attorney General and House of Representatives, where she honed her experience in legislative strategy and advocacy. Her commitment to community impact and economic resilience continues to shape the business landscape in Ohio.

Honorees will be recognized at a special awards celebration on July 17 at Vitria on the Square.

View the full 2025 Women of Influence list and learn more about those recognized [here](#).