

# 2026 ANNUAL CONFERENCE SPEAKER ANNOUNCEMENT

The Public Affairs Research Council of Louisiana is excited to announce **Casey Mock** – a nationally recognized voice on technology, policy and ethics – as the keynote speaker at our 2026 Annual Conference on April 30.



Casey Mock serves as Senior Policy Advisor to social psychologist Jonathan Haidt and the national movement behind The Anxious Generation, focusing on how digital technologies shape youth well-being and democratic trust. He also teaches “Science, Law & Policy” in Duke University’s Applied Ethics & Science Policy program and writes *Tomorrow’s Mess*, a newsletter on how emerging technology is remaking politics, culture and governance.

Over his career, Casey has served both Democratic and Republican governors; led the Vermont Economic Progress Council; advised Minnesota’s governor on budget and policy; and worked on state and local public policy at Amazon.

At PAR’s 2026 Annual Conference, Casey will begin by grounding the audience in today’s polarization: how decades of party sorting have turned political differences into social identities, how hostility between partisans has grown and how many Americans feel exhausted by constant conflict. He will discuss how social media fractured our shared reality and how artificial intelligence may finish the job by creating highly personalized, opaque information environments that push people into increasingly separate civic worlds.

Casey will then connect this technological shift to the long decline of the community institutions that once helped Americans disagree without coming apart: service clubs, congregations and local civic organizations that brought people with different backgrounds into the same room to work on shared goals. As those institutions have weakened, screens and platforms have stepped in as substitutes, often deepening isolation instead of building social capital.

Casey will close with practical solutions for addressing these problems, giving Louisiana leaders a clear, accessible framework for understanding the coming “fracture” and a set of concrete ideas for how business, civic and policy leaders can respond.

PAR’s Conference will be on April 30, 2026, from 10 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at the Crowne Plaza in Baton Rouge.