

BIOGRAPHY

Senate President Stephen R. Morris **39th District, State of Kansas**

Elected to the Kansas Senate in 1992, Steve Morris is in his fifth four-year term. Morris was honored in 2004 and again in 2008 to be elected President of the Senate by his Senate Republican colleagues. This position carries a great deal of additional responsibility.

The President appoints qualified legislators and private individuals to serve on a wide variety of statutory boards and commissions. He presides over the Senate during the legislative session and has the authority to assign legislation to a specific committee for consideration. When the legislature is not in session, the Senate President directs a full time, year-around staff to handle Senate business. He alternately serves as chairman or vice-chairman of the Legislative Coordinating Council, and is a member of the State Finance Council and Capitol Restoration Commission.

As President, Sen. Morris is chairman of the Organization, Calendar and Rules Committee which determines the number, scope, leadership and membership of Senate committees. He is also chairman of the Interstate Cooperation Committee, and a member of the Federal and State Affairs Committee and Agriculture Committee. He previously was a member of Ways and Means and chaired that key committee for four years. Sen. Morris is a member of the Joint Committee on Pensions, Investments and Benefits, and he created and led the Senate's KPERS Select Committee created in Jan. 2011 to address the ongoing issues with unfunded liability in the state's retirement system.

Sen. Morris is an active member of a number of boards, committees and commissions at the local, state and national levels. Early in 2011, he was named President-elect of the National Conference of State Legislatures; he officially became President at NCSL's Annual Meeting in August 2011. He currently serves on the NCSL Deficit Reduction Task Force and the Executive Committee Task Force on Sustainable Energy. He serves on the Executive Committee of The Energy Council (a consortium of energy producing states and Canadian provinces, and the country of Venezuela). He is on the Executive Committee for both the Council of State Governments (CSG) and CSG Midwest and on the National Conference of State Legislatures Executive Committee Task Force on Sustainability.

He was chair of the NCSL Standing Committees and past chair of the NCSL Agriculture and Energy Committee and of the Council of State Governments (CSG) Agriculture Task Force. In the past, he has been chairman of the CSG Health Capacity Task Force and served on the NCSL Rural Policy Task Force Steering Committee. He is a trustee for the United Methodist Health Ministry Fund through 2012.

Senator Morris has also been instrumental in bringing Kansas to the forefront in the areas of bioscience and alternative energies. He passionately believes the state can and should play a major role in helping the nation become energy independent. Morris successfully worked with other state and federal leaders to secure Kansas as the site for the new National BioAgro-defense Facility and has taken the lead on legislation to create and support the Animal Health Corridor between the Kansas State University Animal Sciences programs and the industry leaders located between Manhattan and Kansas City.

Steve Morris has always been an advocate for Kansas public education. An alum and avid fan of Kansas State University, Sen. Morris has served that institution in a number of roles, including as president of the Kansas State University Alumni Association board of Directors. He was on the KSU Essential Edge National Steering Committee and the National Policy Committee. In 1987, he served on the Agriculture

2000 Committee. As Chairman of the Crops, Horticulture & Forestry Subcommittee, he lead his committee's effort to make recommendations to KSU regarding Ag Research and Extension. Sen. Morris was chairman of the College of Agriculture Legislative Support Group for four years. He was awarded the Distinguished Service Award from the Kansas State University College of Agriculture.

Morris served fifteen years on the USD 210 Board of Education, including two stints as vice-president and one four-year term as president. He was on the Interstate Migrant Education Council for seven years and on the Legislative Committee for the Kansas Association of School Boards for twelve years.

Early this year, Sen. Morris was named to the Higher Education Honor Roll by the Citizens for Higher Education. In March of 2010, he was honored by the Turquoise Council of Americans and Eurasians with the Turquoise Council Government Service Award for 2010. In 2009, Morris was given the Kansas Commission on Disability Concerns' Leadership Award and was also recognized with the 2009 Legislative Leadership Award from InterHab. Senator Morris was awarded the 2007 Charles Dick Medal of Merit by the National Guard Association of the United States. The National Guard Association of Kansas bestowed its Legislative Support Award for 2005-2006 to Sen. Morris. He was named "Outstanding Elected Official" by the Kansas Emergency Medical Technicians Association in April 2005; and received the Stevens County Soil Conservation "Public Achievement Award" in February 2005. He was named the 2002 Outstanding Public Official of the Year by the Community Mental Health Association of Kansas and was given the Rocky Mountain Council on Mental Health Centers Award in 2004.

Senator Morris graduated from Hugoton High School and from Kansas State University, with a degree in Agriculture Economics. As part of his military training, Morris graduated from the Air Force Undergraduate Pilot Training. He saw active duty as an Air Force pilot in Vietnam, earning US Air Force Air Medals for combat missions flown in 1971 and 1973. An Air Force Reservist (Retired), Morris also was Liaison Officer for the Air Force Academy.

He holds many civic and professional memberships, including the Kansas Farm Bureau, the Hugoton Chamber of Commerce, Gamma Sigma Delta Agriculture Honorary Fraternity, Veterans of Foreign Wars, and the American Legion.

Active in Stevens County and Kansas Republican activities, Morris was Republican County Chairman from 1982-1992, served as County Chairman for Nancy Landon Kassebaum Baker, Bush-Quayle, and Bush-Cheney, and has also been a delegate or alternate to state and district conventions.

Senator Morris and his wife, Barb, have three daughters and eight grandchildren. They have a farming operation – wheat and corn – at Hugoton.

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