

SAN ANTONIO, TX - Kansas Senate President Stephen R. Morris has officially become president of the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL). NCSL is a bipartisan organization that serves the nation's 7,382 state lawmakers. Senator Morris began his new leadership role during NCSL's annual Legislative Summit on August 11th in San Antonio, Texas.

Morris, a Republican, succeeds Massachusetts Senator Richard T. Moore, a Democrat, to the post of president. The position alternates between the two parties each year.

"NCSL has always been a bipartisan organization, emphasizing civility and building relationships between Republicans and Democrats," said Senator Morris. "I hope to keep this tradition and encourage chambers around the country to do the same."

Commenting further, Senator Morris said that "NCSL has always been front and center on the issues, making sure states have the flexibility they need to handle both new issues, and ones that have been around for years. I hope to work with our federal partners to gain greater flexibility on state and federal programs, and minimize and eliminate mandates."

Senator Morris has been actively involved in NCSL for more than a decade, having served as vice president and chair of the Standing Committees, a member of the Federal Deficit Reduction Task Force, a member of the Environment Committee, and chair of the Agriculture and Energy Committee. As president, he will chair the NCSL Executive Committee's Budget, Finance and Rules Committee.

Elected to the Kansas Senate in 1992, Senator Morris is in his fifth four-year term. Senator Morris was honored in 2004 and again in 2008 to be elected president of the Senate by his Senate colleagues. He presides over the Senate during the legislative session, assigns legislation to specific committees, and when the legislature is not in session, 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.

Senator Morris has a degree in agriculture economics from Kansas State University, and graduated from the Air Force Undergraduate Pilot Training. He saw active duty as a pilot in Vietnam, earning medals for combat missions flown in 1971 and 1973. Morris was also the liaison officer for the U.S. Air Force Academy as an Air Force reservist. 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.

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