



Lt. Governors Ascend Fifteen Times this Decade and More Than Any Other Official since 1980

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 17, 2008

Contact: NLGA Director Julia Hurst (859) 283-1400

Fifteen lieutenant governors and officials second-in-command have succeeded to governor since 2000, according to the National Lieutenant Governors Association (NLGA). A 2006 study also shows the office of lieutenant governor has a greater success rate of its occupants becoming governor than any other local, state or federal official.

“So far this decade, the nation is averaging two gubernatorial successions per year, including the ascension today of New York Governor David Paterson,” said NLGA Director Julia Hurst. NLGA is the professional association for state officials first in line of gubernatorial succession.

“Since 2000, thirteen gubernatorial successions have occurred as a result of resignation, and two due to death,” said Hurst. Every region of the country has been affected with successions occurring in Missouri (Oct. 2000), Texas (Dec. 2000), Delaware (Jan. 2001), Wisconsin (Jan. 2001), New Jersey (Jan. 2001), Massachusetts (Apr. 2001), Pennsylvania (Oct. 2001), New Jersey (2002- 2003 – Five-governors-in-Seven-days successions), Indiana (Sept. 2003), Utah (Nov. 2003), Connecticut (Jul. 2004), New Jersey (Nov. 2004), Nebraska (Jan. 2005), Idaho (May 2006), and New York (Mar. 2008). The U.S. territory of American Samoa also had a gubernatorial succession in April of 2003.

“A lieutenant governor or official first in line of succession may become governor through succession or by being elected governor at some time,” said Hurst. “Two studies from 2006 show that from 1980 – 2006, one in every four governors in office first served as lieutenant governor. Likewise, the occupants of the office of lieutenant governor or first in succession become governor at a greater rate than any local, state or federal official.”

“The office of lieutenant governor is a vital office with an occupant who plays a critical daily and long-range role in state government,” said Hurst.

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