



National Lieutenant Governors Association

Press Advisory

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Kiefer Sutherland ‘Designated Survivor’ Premiere Wednesday Night Begg Question: What Would States do in Disaster?

A television show debuting Wednesday night makes actor Kiefer Sutherland the next United States President – from 12th in line of succession following a disaster. The federal ‘designated survivor’ protocol ensures the nation’s government continues in event of disaster.

But what is the practice for disasters at the state level?

In 45 states, an official holding the title “lieutenant governor” becomes governor if the governor’s office becomes vacant.

Click here to see: [Who are the States' Gubernatorial Successors & How Deep is the Line \(NLGA 2010\)](#)

As of 2011, the National Emergency Management Association reported [What are the State's Lines of Gubernatorial Succession \(NEMA/NLGA 2011\)](#).

When else do successions happen? Gubernatorial successions happen when a new U.S. President is elected – which happens this November. Research from Rutgers University indicates an average of FOUR governors took federal positions per new President for the past 11 Presidents. This means gubernatorial successions may be increasing in 2017.

NLGA research on lines of succession show there are gaps in the law in states and inconsistencies. For more information on the issue of succession to governor, see [NLGA: The Best Collection of State Gubernatorial Succession Information](#).

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