

*Biography of*  
**THE HONORABLE RUTH WHITAKER**  
**ARKANSAS STATE SENATOR**



**SENATE MINORITY LEADER**  
**SENATE DISTRICT 3**

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Senator Ruth Whitaker is ranked number one in seniority in the Arkansas Senate and serves District 3, which is comprised of Crawford, part of Washington, and Franklin counties in northwest Arkansas.

During the 88th General Assembly, Senator Whitaker serves as chairman of Rules, Resolutions and Memorials, chairman of Arkansas Legislative Council's Game and Fish/State Police Committee, and vice-chairman of Judiciary. She is also a member of the following legislative committees: Arkansas Legislative Council, Joint Budget, Joint Performance Review, and Insurance and Commerce.

During the 87th General Assembly, Senator Whitaker served as chair of Senate Rules, Resolutions and Memorials. She was also the vice chair of the Arkansas Legislative Council's Game and Fish/State Police Committee and vice chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee. Additionally, she served on the following legislative committees: Arkansas Legislative Council (ALC); ALC Claims Review; ALC Charitable, Penal and Correctional Institutions; ALC Hospital and Medicaid Study Subcommittee; Joint Budget Committee; Joint Budget Special Language; Joint Energy; Arkansas Game and Fish Commission Oversight Committee; the Task Force on Substance Abuse Prevention; and the Public School Desegregation Lawsuit Resolution Task Force. She was an alternate for the Educational Institutions Subcommittee on Legislative Joint Auditing.

During the most recent session Senator Whitaker supported legislation to improve the Arkansas Code, (the manufacture of items made by) the Arkansas Department of Corrections, funding of the Winthrop Rockefeller State Police Hall of Honor, and the Game and Fish Commission. Additional priorities for the 87th Legislative Session included helping pass Act 33 of 2009 concerning animal cruelty, helping remove the remaining grocery tax and support for Act 721 of 2009 allowing grandparents visitation regardless of parental custody.

Senator Whitaker is serving her fifth consecutive term in the Senate since 2001. In 2003, she was a founding member of the Arkansas Legislative Sportsmen's Caucus, which is concerned with issues relating to hunting, fishing and other outdoor activities.

Before serving in the Senate she served as a city alderman in her hometown of Cedarville. She is a former PTA president, and activist for the Arkansas Heart Association, March of Dimes and organizations supporting cystic fibrosis and muscular dystrophy. An active member of her local chamber of commerce, she is an avid fundraiser.

Senator Whitaker has long been active in her political party. She is a current member of the Arkansas Federation of Republican Women and past president of the Women's Auxiliary to the American Medical Association of Sebastian County. She was elected secretary of the Arkansas State Republican Party from 1992-1994 and has held other appointments in the state party, including vice-chairman and parliamentarian. She is a lifetime member of the American Legion Auxiliary and the Alden Kindred of America tracing her lineage back to the first settlers aboard the Mayflower.

Senator Whitaker has a Bachelor of Arts degree from Hendrix College in Conway. She is a widow of the late Dr. T.J. Whitaker. She has one daughter, one son and two grandchildren.