

*Biography of*  
**THE HONORABLE TRACY STEELE**  
**ARKANSAS STATE SENATOR**



**ASSISTANT PRO TEMPORE**  
**SENATE DISTRICT 34**

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Senator Tracy Steele of North Little Rock is serving his second term as State Senator for District 34, which comprises a portion of Pulaski County. Currently, Senator Steele serves as chairman of the Senate Interim Committee on Children and Youth; vice chairman of Public Health, Welfare and Labor; and chairman of the Arkansas Legislative Council Hospital and Medicaid Study Subcommittee. He is a member of numerous other committees and subcommittees including Senate City, County and Local Affairs Committee; Senate Rules, Resolutions and Memorials; Joint Budget Committee; and the Legislative Lottery Oversight Committee.

Outside Arkansas, Senator Steele works with legislators from other states on regional and national committees including the Southern Legislative Conference (SLC) under the Council of State Governments (CSG), the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) and the National Black Caucus of State Legislators (NBCSL). He is a member of the Health Committee of NCSL, the Annual Meeting Committee of CSG and the Fiscal Affairs and Government Operations and the Human Services and Public Safety Committees of SLC.

During the 87th General Assembly, Steele was appointed Assistant Pro Tempore of the Senate and was responsible for several key bills passed during the legislative session. He was lead sponsor of Act 393 of 2009, which created a statewide emergency trauma system to efficiently deliver the highest quality care to citizens with life-threatening injuries. He also sponsored the Antony Hobbs III Act to provide school-based automated external defibrillators and cardiopulmonary resuscitation programs throughout the state.

Other prominent legislation provided unemployed workers quicker access to unemployment benefits, banned the sale of toy guns that are replicas of real guns, and provided more than \$200,000 in scholarship support for Historically Black Colleges and Universities.

A longtime public health advocate, Senator Steele sponsored other important legislation from previous sessions, including the 2006 Arkansas Clean Indoor Air Act to protect workers and citizens from secondhand smoke in the workplace and public places. One of his proudest legislative achievements is the funding and completion of the State Capitol monument *Testament*, which is dedicated to the Little Rock Nine and the civil rights movement.

Senator Steele has been widely recognized for his recent legislative achievements with several awards, including the 2009 Community Health Centers Legislative Champion Award, the Distinguished Legislator Award from the Arkansas Municipal League (June 2009), the 2009 Community Champion Award from Mother's Against Drunk Driving (June 2009) and the Arkansas Department of Health's Public Health Heroes Award (April 2009), given to legislators instrumental in enacting important new health care legislation. Steele also received the 2009 Public Health Through Public Policy Award from the UAMS Fay W. Boozman College of Public Health in recognition of his commitment to public health. On the national level, Steele was the 2003 recipient of the Legislator of the Year Award from the National Directors of Chronic Diseases and the American Heart Association.

During his tenure in the Arkansas Senate, Steele was elected Senate Majority Leader of the 86th General Assembly, the first African-American to be elected to the position.

He previously served as Senate Majority Whip of the 85th General Assembly. Senator Steele has held other key leadership positions regionally and nationally, including regional vice chairman of Region 10 of the National Black Caucus of State Legislators (NBCSL), 2007 National Conference chairman of the NBCSL Annual Conference held in Little Rock and Host Committee chairman of the 2005 Southern Legislative Conference, also held in Little Rock.

In 1999, Steele was elected to the Arkansas State House of Representatives and served two terms. As a Representative, he served as chairman of the House Public Health, Labor and Welfare Committee and president of the Arkansas Legislative Black Caucus. Among his legislative achievements in the House, he championed after-school enrichment programs, assisted-living programs and parity for children's mental health. He established an official state holiday in honor of Daisy Gatson Bates, mandated all public education institutions include physical education as a part of the curriculum and established the Kids for Health Program through the Arkansas Department of Health.

Steele began his government career as special assistant for economic and community development in the Arkansas Governor's Office for then-Governor Bill Clinton, and served on the Hispanic Task Force.

In 2006 Steele founded two private ventures including *STAND! News*, a publication focused on issues affecting the black community, and The STAND Foundation, Incorporated, a nonprofit organization dedicated to leadership development for young adults. He is the former executive director of the Arkansas Martin Luther King Jr. Commission. Most noted for his work with youth, he is the past chairman of the Youth Enterprise in Agriculture and the Ambassadors of Life, an organization that serves disadvantaged youth.

Senator Steele founded the Midnight Basketball program, the Single Parent Scholarship Fund and the North Little Rock Boys & Girls Club. He currently serves on the Board of Trustees at Baptist Health and is also member of the Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Incorporated.

A native of North Little Rock, Senator Tracy Steele holds a degree in political science from Rice University in Houston, Texas, and completed Governor's School at Duke University. He and his wife, Cassandra, have one daughter and one son and are members of St. Mark Baptist Church in Little Rock.