

98th General Assembly

Office of the Senate President

The Senate President is the presiding officer of the Illinois Senate, elected by the 59 members of the Senate to serve a two-year term. The Illinois Constitution, statutes and rules define the functions and responsibilities of the office.

The President appoints Senate members to standing committees and permanent and interim study commissions, designating one member as chair. The President also appoints the Majority Leader and Assistant Majority Leaders, who serve as officers of the Senate.

With the Speaker of the House, the Senate President shares primary responsibility for legislative procedures and operations. By strategically directing the flow of legislation, the President ultimately sets the pace of work in the Senate. The President is required to approve all vouchers for the expenditure of funds appropriated for use by the Senate and certify that all bills passed by the Senate are in accordance with Senate rules.

As chair of the Senate Operations Commission, the President oversees a seven-member management committee responsible for deciding Senate policy, hiring Senate employees, purchasing supplies, renting equipment, and maintaining the Senate chambers and office, among other duties.

In addition to presiding over the Senate, the President is the leader of the majority party in the legislature's upper chamber. Likewise, the Senate Minority Leader, selected by the minority party and formally elected by all Senate members, speaks on behalf of the minority party. Responsibilities of the Senate Minority Leader include appointing members to serve on certain boards, commissions and standing committees and selecting assistant leaders and staff.



John J. Cullerton
Senate President

John J. Cullerton (Democrat) has been a member of the General Assembly for more than three decades, gaining a reputation for his ability to negotiate and willingness to reach across the aisle for the best policy outcomes. Senator Cullerton was elected to his first term as Senate President in January 2009 and has worked to encourage bipartisanship and cooperation among party leaders.

Cullerton began his service in the General Assembly in 1979 when he was elected to the Illinois House, serving as Speaker Pro Tempore and Democratic Floor Leader. He was elected to the Senate in 1992 representing the 6th Legislative District and most recently re-elected in November 2012. He has served as chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee and

was Majority Caucus Whip in the 95th General Assembly.

Throughout his Senate career, Cullerton has dedicated himself to issues of traffic safety and public health. He spearheaded the state's mandatory seatbelt law and the Child Passenger Safety Act, and sponsored the statewide smoking ban. Senator Cullerton also has advocated public safety initiatives, criminal justice system reform and tax modernization. At the conclusion of the 93rd and 94th General Assemblies, Cullerton was recognized for successfully sponsoring more laws than any other legislator.

Cullerton received both his undergraduate and law degrees from Loyola University Chicago. He is a partner with the Chicago law firm of Thompson Coburn. Senator Cullerton and his wife, Pamela, live in Chicago and have five children.

James F. Clayborne, Jr. (Democrat) was elected Senate Majority Leader in January 2009. First sworn in as a Senator representing the 57th Legislative District in 1995 to serve the remaining term of the late Senator Kenneth Hall, Senator Clayborne was elected to a full term in 1996 and most recently re-elected in November 2012.

Senator Clayborne is an active member of the Illinois State Board of Investment and the Autism Task Force. He was recognized as Legislator of the Year by the St. Louis Regional Chamber and Growth Association for four consecutive years, and received the Exemplary Service to Education Award from the Illinois Association of School Administrators in 2008.

Clayborne was born Dec. 29, 1963, in St. Louis, Mo., and raised in East St. Louis. After graduating from Tennessee State University in 1985, he earned his J.D. degree in 1988 from the University of Miami School of Law in Coral Gables, Fla. He served as an assistant state's attorney and a felony prosecutor in St. Clair County before practicing law in the private sector.

Senator Clayborne is a partner with the law firm of Clayborne, Sabo and Wagner, LLP, of Belleville. He has four sons and resides in Belleville.



James F. Clayborne, Jr.
Senate Majority
Leader



Christine Radogno
Senate Minority
Leader

Christine Radogno (Republican) has served in the General Assembly since 1997, when she was elected to the Senate to represent the 24th Legislative District. She was re-elected in 2002 to represent the newly drawn 41st Legislative District and most recently re-elected in November 2012.

In January 2009, Senator Radogno was elected Senate Minority Leader, the first female to hold the position in Senate history, and was re-elected to a third term in 2013. She served as Assistant Minority Leader from 2007 to 2009.

During her Senate tenure, Radogno has served on the Appropriations Committee, becoming the lead budget expert and negotiator for the Senate Republican Caucus. She also has served on the Committees on Public Health and Human Services; Executive; Rules; and Transportation.

Senator Radogno is a recognized leader, emphasizing fiscal responsibility and commitment to restoring discipline and accountability to the state's borrowing and contracting practices. She is a long-time advocate for ethical and fiscal reform in state government, and is dedicated to fostering a responsible health-care system in Illinois. She has introduced measures to create parity within the health-care system and expand medical assistance to indigent families, the elderly, persons with disabilities and children.

Senator Radogno received her bachelor's and master's degrees from Loyola University Chicago. She and her husband, Nunzio, reside in Lemont. They have three children and one grandson.