



Rep. Karla Drenner
District 85

Biography

A native of Charleston, West Virginia, Karla has lived and studied in various regions throughout the U.S. Karla earned a Bachelor of Science in Health Physics from West Virginia State College; she received an Master of Business Administration from Fontbonne University; and a Master of Science in Environmental Science from Southern Illinois University. She was awarded a PhD in Public Policy Analysis and Administration from St. Louis University and completed her second PhD curriculum in Occupational Safety & Health from LaSalle University.

She was elected to the Georgia House of Representatives in 2000, where she is in her 10th term sitting on five legislative committees, including the Rules, Health & Human Services, Natural Resources & Environment, Energy, Utilities & Telecommunications and Small Business Development committees. Also, she serves as the chair of the DeKalb County House of Representatives legislative delegation.

Karla is also active in the policy process nationally, where she serves on the Policy Committee for the National Foundation for Women Legislators. Recently she was selected to participate in a two-year healthcare taskforce by the Conference of State Government. At the regional level she serves on the Energy and Environmental Public Policy Committee of the Southern Legislative Conference.

She has written several books entitled: “One: The True Story of Politics, Prayer, and the Power of One” in which she shares her legislative experiences. Her most recent book, “Social Jurisprudence in the Changing of Social Norms,” identifies how government systems can assist future generations in combating the harsh realities of inequities. Her text on the “Impacts of Faith-Based Decision Making on the Individual Legislative Process” explores the legislative process and the importance of bridging the divide with those who have divergent viewpoints on issues. She has received over 30 awards and recognitions for service contributions to public, private or nonprofit organizations.

Karla has continued her own personal development. In 2013, she was selected to attend a course at the Winthrop Rockefeller Institute at the University of Arkansas Center for Advancement of Leadership Skills. In 2012, she was chosen as a “Toll Fellow” by the Council of State Governments’ National Leadership Center. Also, in 2012, she was chosen by the Institute for Georgia’s Environmental Leadership Program dedicated to building and sustaining a diverse network of environmentally educated leaders in the state of Georgia.

As a 2011 alumna of the Harvard University Kennedy School of Government’s Senior Executives in State and Local Government Program, Rep. Drenner, along with faculty and

participants, worked on real-life case studies addressing one of the most frequently cited problems of public officials: how to create and engage in public discourse about difficult subjects.

In addition to her duties in the General Assembly, Dr. Drenner is a graduate professor for Purdue University Global, where she teaches in the public administration program. She has taught at several other higher education institutions including DeVry University, where she taught both graduate and undergraduate courses.