

Barbara Flynn Currie

State Representative Barbara Flynn Currie represents the 25th District, which includes portions of the Chicago communities of Woodlawn, South Shore, Hyde Park and Kenwood. She has served the people of the 25th District since 1979, rising to the position of Assistant Majority Leader in 1993 and Assistant Democratic Leader in 1995. In 1997, she became the first woman Majority Leader in the history of the Illinois General Assembly. As the second ranking House official, Currie works closely with the Governor and with colleagues from both parties and all regions of the state to fashion solutions to the problems that face Illinois. During her tenure she has been a strong advocate for working families and children.

Representative Currie's legislative accomplishments include sponsorship of the Illinois Earned Income Tax Credit Act, which allows working families to keep more of their income, and the Illinois Freedom of Information Act, the law that ensures public access to public records. Over the years, she has also passed several improvements to the original law, such as ending blanket exceptions from public disclosure of correctional and law enforcement records. She also has initiated the state program that funds pre-school services for disadvantaged children as studies show that children with quality early learning experiences have a far greater chance to succeed in later life. She has worked successfully to prohibit sexual harassment in the workplace and to improve access to state contracts for businesses owned by women and members of minority groups. She has sponsored legislation to protect Illinois groundwater, to protect nursing home residents from abuse and to improve child-support enforcement.

Many organizations have honored Currie for her work in Springfield. She was named an Outstanding Legislator by the Illinois Hospital Association and a Friend of Labor by the Illinois AFL-CIO. The Independent Voters of Illinois-Independent Precinct Organization (IVI-IPO) has bestowed on her its "Best Legislator" award time after time. She was a recipient of the Chicago Urban League's Beautiful People award. She was given the National Public Elected Official award by the National Association of Social Workers, and she was honored by the American Public Health Association for her work on health care issues. The Women's Bar Association of Illinois has also honored her with its "Women With Vision" award.

Currie attended the University of Chicago, where she graduated from the College with honors before earning a Master's degree in political science. She is a member of the Chicago League of Women Voters, Women United for South Shore and the Board of the ACLU of Illinois. She is active in many civic, community and environmental organizations. She and her late husband, David P. Currie, have two children and four grandchildren.

Legislation Sponsored:

- Earned Income Tax Credit Freedom of Information Act
- Distressed Hospital Funding Emergency Public Aid Programs
- Prohibition of Sex Harassment
- Nursing Home Care Reform Act

- Free Mammograms for Poor Women
- Extend Voting Hours to 7:00 pm
- Fund All-Day Kindergarten
- Extend Pre-Natal Services
- Strengthen Minority and Female Business Access to State Contracts

Elected or Appointed Public Office:

- State Representative, 25th District, 1979 - Present
- House Majority Leader, 1997
- Assistant Democratic Leader, 1995
- Assistant Majority Leader, 1993