

Jim Long, Commissioner Of Insurance

Submitted by Ronnie Condrey

Jim Long combines public service and political skills in ways that have served the citizens of North Carolina for many years.

He served in the North Carolina House of Representatives representing his native Alamance County. Long then worked as Chief Deputy Commissioner in the N.C. Department of Insurance before becoming counsel to the House Speaker.



Long was first elected as Insurance Commissioner in 1984 and hit the ground running. He hired well qualified staff, automated the Department, and greatly improved existing consumer protection programs. He established the first Seniors' Health Insurance Information Program in the country, one that is still the national model.

Although he has many responsibilities as Insurance Commissioner, Jim Long is best known for protecting drivers from high automobile insurance rates. Since being elected, the Commissioner has saved the state's drivers nearly \$ 4.3 billion dollars from proposed rate increases. North Carolina drivers have the fifth lowest rates in the country.

As Insurance Commissioner, he is the State Fire Marshal, chairs the Arson Awareness Council, and the Safe Kids Program. He serves on a large number of boards and commissions. Commissioner Long takes an active role in the management of the Department of Insurance. He makes it a point to get to know each of the employees and is very popular with staff. He has previously served as president of the National Association of Insurance Commissioners and currently serves as past President. Jim Long is also one of the founders of the North Carolina Special Olympics.

Jim Long learned political skills and Democratic politics from an early age. His father and grandfather both served in the legislature, and he joined the Young Democrats at the tender age of six weeks. He learned public service and political skills not only from his family but many mentors in the Young Democrats, Alamance County, former Governors, and legislators such as former Speaker Liston Ramsey.

He was first elected Insurance Commissioner in 1984, in an otherwise unfavorable year for Democrats. He has subsequently been elected every four years by wider and wider margins. He generally has the highest percentage of the votes among all Democratic state-wide candidates. These victories represent both his political skills and his superb job of protecting the public.

Jim Long is a leader within the North Carolina Democratic Party. He gladly assists other elected officials and candidates, serving as a mentor to many. He was an early and strong supporter of State Democratic Party Chair Jerry Meek.

He is a true Democratic Hero.