



President Pro Tempore Eric Johnson

Senate District 1



Senator Eric Johnson was elected to the Georgia State Senate from the 1st District in 1994 after serving in the House of Representatives since 1992. Senator Johnson is a Republican representing the citizens of Bryan and portions of Chatham and Liberty counties.

Senator Johnson served as the Senate Minority Leader for two terms and was elected as President Pro Tempore of the Georgia Senate in January 2003. This is the highest position in the Senate and helps run the day-to-day operations of this legislative body.

As President Pro Tem, Johnson chairs the Administrative Affairs Committee. Senator Johnson also serves as Co-Chairman of the Joint Legislative Ethics Committee and Vice Chairman of the Regulated Industries and Utilities Committee. He is also a member of the Appropriations, Assignments, Ethics, Finance, Natural Resources and the Environment and Rules committees.

Senator Johnson has authored several important pieces of legislation while serving in the Senate, including the *Georgia Special Needs Scholarship* in 2007. This scholarship allows parents of children with physical, emotional or developmental disabilities in public schools to apply for scholarships equal to the state funding for their child's special education and use it for any other participating public or private school that offers a better environment for their child. This is Georgia's first voucher program and more than 100 private schools and nearly 1,000 students are participating in its first year of operation.

During his tenure in the legislature, he also created a new crime of domestic terrorism and placed it under the death penalty statute; he increased penalties for child abuse, including making it a felony to seriously injure a child and passed an amendment to the Georgia Constitution to protect Georgians' right to hunt and fish.

Johnson also passed the *Know Thy Neighbor Act* that requires the Board of Pardons and Paroles to set up a system whereby any citizen can obtain a list of parolees. In 1997, he passed

the *School Safety Act* that requires notification of local school systems by Superior Court when a juvenile is convicted of a felony.

Senator Johnson led the successful effort to pass civil justice (Tort) reform, brought local jails under the *Mutiny in Prison Act* so that prisoners who harm a jailer could be charged with a felony, allowed 'Do Not Resuscitate' orders to be portable, mandated periodic re-negotiation of the distribution of the Local Option Sales Tax (LOST) between local governments to increase the fairness of property tax roll-backs, and wrote the amendment to the *Moment of Silence* law to allow student-initiated prayer at school and school events. In addition he required local law enforcement to pay the cost of the medical exam of rape victims and created the *Rape Victims' Bill of Rights*.

He received a master's degree in architecture from Tulane University in 1976 and currently is an architect working for North Point Industrial, a commercial real estate development firm.

Senator Johnson and his wife, Kathryn, are the parents of two children – Righton and Marcus. He and his family attend Savannah Christian Church.

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