

PRESS RELEASE

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Patrice Arent Will Not Seek Reelection To Utah Senate

Championed Children, Seniors and Consumers

State Senator Patrice Arent (D) announced today that she would not seek reelection to the Utah Senate. Arent was elected to the Utah House of Representatives in 1997, where she served for four years in leadership as Democratic Whip and Assistant Democratic Whip. After six years in the House, her legislative district was eliminated through the redistricting process. In 2002 she ran for the State Senate, defeating the incumbent Senate Majority Leader. Arent currently serves on the following committees: Education, Judiciary, Judicial Confirmation, Higher Education Appropriations, Water Task Force, and the Online Court Assistance Policy Board. She is the founder and co-chair of the Firefighter's Caucus and co-chair of the Cultural Caucus.

"I have been honored to serve in the Utah House and the Utah Senate for almost a decade. I am proud of my record of service, and grateful for the trust placed in me as an elected representative. It is time for me to move onto new challenges," said Arent.

During her ten sessions in the Utah Legislature, Arent was the primary sponsor for nearly sixty bills, almost all of which passed. She is recognized for successfully authoring the baby drop off law (allowing for the safe relinquishment of newborns), protecting students with asthma and diabetes in schools, providing for school safety plans, and creating the Traffic Safety Task Force. Arent's legislation increased penalties for ID theft through communications fraud ("anti-phishing"), gave law enforcement new tools to stop clandestine drug labs, protected seniors who sign pre-need funeral contracts, and helped patients gain easier access to their own medical records. She passed Utah's first legislation regulating price gouging during emergencies. Arent is also known for her legislation improving procedures in juvenile court and her resolution to eliminate bullying in Utah's schools. She closed some of the loopholes in Utah's campaign finance laws, worked to stop higher level nuclear waste from being brought into Utah, and fought tirelessly to increase funding for education, health and human services. In addition, she passed legislation providing the public with much more information before neighborhoods can be annexed into cities.

Arent just completed her eighteenth session working in various capacities at the Utah Legislature. Her legislative career started as a student lobbyist for the University of Utah. She served as a legislative Hinckley Intern for Governor Scott Matheson, worked as Associate General Counsel to the Utah Legislature and served as the Chief of Legislative Relations in the Utah Attorney General's office.

Arent currently serves as the Vice President of the National Association of Jewish Legislators (NAJL). In early January she visited Israel, where she was one of three state legislators representing NAJL in meetings with approximately fifty Jewish members of Parliament and Ministers from twenty seven countries. Arent met with members of the Israeli government, including former Prime Ministers Shimon Peres and Benjamin Netanyahu. In 2002 she also represented NAJL in meetings in Israel with the international group of Jewish parliamentarians and met with Prime Minister Ariel Sharon.

Arent has received a number of awards based on her legislative service, some of which include the "Hero on the Hill Award" from the Legislative Coalition for People with Disabilities, the first "Distinguished Legislative Service Award" from the Utah Medical Association, and the award for "Outstanding Contributions to Crime Prevention Efforts" from the Utah Council of Crime Prevention. She was named the Christine Durham Woman Lawyer of the Year by the Women Lawyers of Utah, received the Salt Lake County Democrats Spirit of Democracy Award, and the United Jewish Federation Community Achievement Award. She was twice selected by the Democratic Leadership Council as one of "One Hundred to Watch - 100 New Democrats Who Are Changing the Face of American Politics."

Born and raised in Salt Lake City, Arent graduated from the University of Utah and Cornell Law School. She serves on many community boards, including the University of Utah Hospital Board of Trustees, the Utah Safe Haven Committee, the Utah Hospital Association Strategic Planning Committee, and the University of Utah Social and Behavioral Science Advisory Board. She served on the Utah Constitutional Revision Commission, the Utah Supreme Court Committee on the Delivery of Legal Services, the United Jewish Federation Board of Directors, and on many committees of the Utah Bar Association. She has also volunteered as a small claims court judge and scout merit badge advisor.

Senator Arent started as a parking lot attendant and gift wrapper at her family business, "Arent's Doorway to Fashion." She also worked as a waitress, substitute teacher, law clerk in federal court, and an attorney in private practice at Snow, Christensen and Martineau.

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