

POLITICAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Governor Vic Atiyeh

Vic Atiyeh began his 28-year political career in 1958 when he ran for a seat in the Oregon House of Representatives from Washington County. He won his first attempt at public office, beginning a near perfect record of political victories. Interestingly, for this political race he raised \$217.50 in campaign contributions and spent \$138.70.

What followed was a 20-year career in the Oregon Legislature. After serving three two-year terms in the House, he was elected to the Senate in 1964. He served 12 years in the Senate, resigning mid-way through his last term to assume the governorship.

Atiyeh served in the Oregon Legislature for twenty years (January 12, 1959 - November 24, 1978) including 16 years as Senate minority leader. While many Oregon governors served in the Legislature prior to their gubernatorial service, Atiyeh recorded the longest legislative tenure of any previous Oregon chief executive.

In 1974, Atiyeh ran for governor for the first time. His upset primary victory over Secretary of State Clay Myers (60% to 33%) gave him a near sweep, winning 34 of 36 counties. In the general election, Atiyeh suffered his only election defeat in 28 years of elective office, losing to Bob Straub (57% to 42%). Atiyeh ran for election a total of 18 times, winning 17 elections.

In 1978, Atiyeh again ran for governor. Early in the three-way Republican primary, Atiyeh was running third behind former Gov. Tom McCall and Roger Martin. However, the final tally showed an upset victory with Atiyeh gaining 46% to McCall's 33% and Martin's 17%. In his rematch with Gov. Straub, Atiyeh won with 54% of the vote to Straub's 44%.

Gov. Atiyeh's re-election campaign in 1982 began with an easy victory in an uneventful primary. Shortly after the primary election, however, several polls showed the incumbent governor trailing his Democratic challenger, State Senator Ted Kulongoski. During this election year, the governor had to call three special sessions to re-balance the state's budget by cutting programs and raising taxes. Again, coming from behind, Atiyeh won his last election with a 62% to 35% margin. This was Oregon's largest gubernatorial victory margin in 32 years and the fourth largest in Oregon history.

Gov. Atiyeh will complete his term on January 12, 1987, 28 years to the day from the beginning of his elective service to Oregon. He will join a select group of only three other governors who have served a full eight years as governor (Tom McCall, Mark Hatfield and Sylvester Pennoyer). In actual days, no other governor will have served longer than Gov. Atiyeh.

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