

STATE REP. STEVEN WOLENS

LEGISLATIVE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

67TH - 78TH LEGISLATIVE SESSIONS

(1981-2003)

I. BIOGRAPHY AND AWARDS

Steve Wolens was born in Dallas and grew up in Corsicana, where his family founded the K. Wolens department stores. During high school, he served as a page in the U.S. Congress and worked in the Washington office of Congressman Olin Teague. He graduated from *Stanford University* with distinction in 1973 and from *SMU Law School* in 1976.

Steve is serving his twelfth term in the Texas Legislature. He is chairman of the Select Committee on Ethics. He has served as chairman of the State Affairs and Business and Commerce committees in past sessions.

Steve has worked on many major pieces of legislation during his time in the Texas House of Representatives. He passed landmark ethics and election reforms in 2003, clean air legislation in 2001, and electric deregulation legislation in 1999. He has also passed numerous bills to ensure public safety, including the “Two Strikes and You’re Out” law for repeat sex offenders, reforms to deter drunk driving, and heightened penalties for hit-and-run drivers, prostitution, and barratry (i.e., incitement to litigation by attorneys soliciting clients). A strong supporter of education, Steve has championed the UT Southwestern Medical Center and UT Dallas. He has also worked to protect homeowners in home equity loans, mortgage disputes, and insurance matters.

In 2003, Steve was named one of the “Ten Best Legislators” in the state by *Texas Monthly* magazine. It was the sixth time he received the honor. “His intellectual purity--he cares about the principle, not the politics--gives him near-absolute credibility on complex issues,” the magazine wrote in a previous issue. “Mesmerizing in debate, indefatigable in preparation, incisive in analysis, he is the House’s most dreaded foe and most welcome ally.” They also described him as an “unbeatable debater whose mind stores facts like a camel stores

water.” *D Magazine* has written that Steve is one of the “smartest, most honest, and most effective member(s) of the Dallas delegation.”

Steve has been named an “outstanding legislator” by *Texas Business* magazine, and the Texas Association of Realtors has made him a member of their “Legislative Hall of Fame.” For three sessions, Common Cause awarded him its Public Service Award. Twice, he was named “Legislative Crime Fighter of the Year” by the Greater Dallas Crime Commission. He was also named “Legislator of the Year” in 1999 by both the National Retail Federation and the Texas Municipal League, and again in 2001 by the Texas Renewable Energy Industries Association. In 2003, AARP honored him as the “Outstanding Legislator” of the session.

Steve is a partner at the Diamond McCarthy LLP law firm in Dallas and is married to Dallas Mayor Laura Miller. They have three children.

II. LEGISLATIVE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In over 22 years of public service, Rep. Wolens has authored and passed major pieces of legislation that have had a positive impact at both the statewide and local level. Some of these bills are listed below, grouped according to subject matter.

- **BUSINESS**

Rep. Wolens authored ground-breaking legislation¹ in 1991 that provided for the creation of limited liability companies. These entities provide members with limited liability, as well as a shield from federal corporate income taxes.

Rep. Wolens sponsored the Texas Revised Limited Partnership Act² in 1987. This important legislation modernized existing state law to conform with evolving practices regarding the use of limited partnerships. It de-emphasized the certificate filed with the Secretary of State and gave heightened importance to the partnership agreement in the establishment of relations between partners. The Act also incorporated certain aspects of Texas corporate law, such as provisions for mergers and the consolidation of limited partnerships. That same session, he also authored legislation³ that modernized the substantive corporation laws of Texas.

In 1989, he passed legislation⁴ relating to the incorporation, taxation, and operation of corporations, professional associations, and real estate investment trusts.

¹ HB 278, 72 (R).

² SB 563, 70th (R).

³ HB 418, 70th (R).

⁴ HB 472, 71st (R).

