

Secretary of Health & Human Services Michael Leavitt

Michael O. Leavitt was sworn in as the 20th Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services on January 26, 2005. As secretary, he leads national efforts to protect the health of all Americans and provide essential human services to those in need. He manages the largest civilian department in the federal government, with more than 66,000 employees and a budget that accounts for almost one out of every four federal dollars.

Prior to his current service, Leavitt served as Administrator of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and Governor of Utah. While at EPA, Leavitt signed the Clean Air Diesel Rule, implemented new, more-protective air quality standards for ozone and fine particle pollution and organized a regional collaboration of national significance to clean and protect the Great Lakes.

The people of Utah elected Mike Leavitt governor three times. Prior to leaving the statehouse to work in the Bush Administration, he was the nation's longest-serving governor. During his eleven years of service, Utah was recognized six times as one of America's best managed states. He was chosen by his peers as Chairman of the National Governors Association, Western Governors Association and Republican Governors Association because of his ability to solve problems across partisan lines.

Sec. Leavitt is widely recognized as a health care innovator and welfare reformer, and his record of achievement in Utah bears this out. In 1994, the Utah legislature passed Gov. Leavitt's "Healthprint," a comprehensive, incremental approach to health care improvement in the state. A decade later, Utah has more than 400,000 additional people with health insurance, marked increases in the number of children with health care coverage, dramatically improved immunization rates and per capita cost of healthcare 25% below the national average. He was chosen by the nation's governors to represent the states in Congress on welfare reform, Medicaid and children's health insurance.

The application of technology is a passion for Sec. Leavitt. During his tenure as Governor of Utah, the state's website was awarded "Best of Web," offering more than 110 services online. As Secretary of Health and Human Services he is committed to unleashing the power of technology to improve the quality of care, reduce mistakes and manage costs.

In Leavitt's previous public service he has always pursued three goals: to leave things better than he found them; to plant seeds for the next generation; and to give it his all. These are his goals as leader of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Born February 11, 1951, in Cedar City, Utah, Leavitt graduated with a bachelor's degree in economics and business from Southern Utah University. He served as president and chief executive officer of a regional insurance firm, establishing it as one of the top insurance brokers in America. He is married to Jacalyn S. Leavitt; they are the parents of five children.