

Jason Nelson takes Senior Advisor position with Oklahoma's E Foundation

BY DARLA SHELDEN

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OKLAHOMA CITY – The E Foundation for Oklahoma today announced that former state representative Jason Nelson has joined the organization as Senior Advisor.

Lieutenant Governor Todd Lamb, chairman and founder of the E Foundation, said Nelson's leadership experience and background in public policy are important assets for the foundation.

"The E Foundation has a clear goal of developing long-term policy initiatives to make Oklahoma an even better place to work and live and raise a family," said Lamb.

"Representative Nelson has shown an incredible ability to drill down into difficult issues and create viable solutions. He was one of the most respected members of the legislature due to his seriousness as a lawmaker. Jason has always tackled tough issues and works with others to see them through. We are very excited that he will be a part of the E Foundation team moving forward."

This month, Nelson, an Oklahoma City Republican, finished his fourth term in the Oklahoma House of Representatives. He announced earlier this year he would not seek reelection. Nelson is recognized as a knowledgeable and effective leader on a wide range of children's issues, including education and human services.

"I've seen during my time in public service the challenge of translating a good idea into policy and then ensuring it is faithfully implemented," Nelson said.

"This is an exciting opportunity to work with a talented team focused on overcoming these challenges. The E Foundation was created to fill this important public policy need and is tackling many of the same issues I've spent much of the last eight years working on. It's a good fit all around, and I'm looking forward to being a part of it."

This year, Nelson led the successful bipartisan effort to require insurance coverage for the diagnosis and medically necessary treatment of children on the autism spectrum.

In 2011, he led a bipartisan working group in an unprecedented review of the Department of Human Services child welfare system. The group's work resulted in sweeping reforms during the 2012 session. A constitutional amendment proposed by the group was also approved by voters that year abolishing the DHS Commission.

Michael Carnuccio, E Foundation President, highlighted Nelson's particular experience in education issues.

"No one in the Legislature has worked harder during the last decade to understand the structural inefficiencies in our education system and to develop good solutions that improve both our schools and student performance," said Carnuccio. "Representative Nelson not only has the ability to comprehend those complex issues, but he also has the creative capacity and foresight to offer implementable policy ideas that work. Our team is much stronger with the addition of

Representative Nelson, and I am excited to see him in a policy role that utilizes all of his experience and skills.”

In 2010, Nelson led the bipartisan effort to pass the Lindsey Nicole Henry Scholarships for Students with Disabilities Act, which allows students with special needs to use a portion of their state education money at a qualified private school of their choice. This law was the first of its kind passed in Oklahoma.

Nelson most recently served as House Majority Floor Leader and on several committees including the House Appropriations and Budget Committee, the Rules Committee and the Common Education Committee.

Nelson has had a varied career in the public and private sector, including time on the staff of former Governor Frank Keating. [1] Nelson and his wife, Lori, have two children: Benjamin, 14, and Grace, 10.

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