

Hi this is Chris Micheli with the Sacramento Governmental Relations Firm of Aprea and Micheli and an adjunct professor at McGeorge School of Law in its Capital Lawyering Program. The podcast is on officers and leadership of the legislature.

In both the California State Assembly and the California State Senate, there are designated officers and elected leaders of these two bodies. So, let's take a quick look at the officers and leadership positions in the Assembly and the Senate.

The Assembly officers and leaders.

Speaker - he or she is the highest-ranking officer of the Assembly. Elected by the members at the beginning of the two-year session. And he or she presides over floor sessions and has extensive powers and duties established by the Assembly Rules.

The Speaker Pro Tem is appointed by the Speaker who presides over floor sessions in the absence of the Speaker. And the Assistant Speaker Pro Tem is also appointed by the Speaker and presides over the floor in the absence of the Speaker and the Speaker Pro Tem.

The Majority Floor Leader is elected by the members of the majority party caucus, who represents the Speaker on the floor and oversees the floor proceedings through parliamentary procedures such as motions and points of order.

The Minority Floor Leader is elected by the caucus having the second largest membership in the Assembly and is generally responsible for making motions and points of orders and representing the minority caucus on the Assembly Floor.

The Majority Whip is essentially the political leadership of each party in the Assembly. They are elected by their caucuses or appointed by the Speaker and there are usually Assistant Majority Whips and of course, on the other side of the aisle, there is the Minority Whip who's selected by the Republican leader and there are often multiple Assistant Minority Whips.

There's also the Democratic Caucus Chair who's elected by their respected party who can convene the caucus meetings, provide political advice to leadership, manage staff assisting the members and providing constituent services, and communications. And so too is the Republican Caucus Chair who also performs similar activities.

Also, the Chief Clerk and Chief Sergeant at Arms are elected members. Believe or not, they are elected by the 80 members of the Assembly. The Chief Clerk is a non-partisan non-member officer of the Assembly who is elected by the majority of the membership at the start of each two-year session. As the Chief Legislative officer and Parliamentarian, the Chief Sergeant at Arms is responsible for maintaining order and providing security for Legislators. The Chief Sergeant at Arms is elected by the majority of the members of the house at the beginning of every legislative session.

Let's now turn to the Senate Officers and Leaders.

The President of the Senate, by law, is the Lieutenant Governor. However, by custom the role of the President of the Senate is extremely limited and he or she may be invited periodically to

preside over ceremonial occasions such as the opening of the two-year legislative session. The only time that the Lieutenant Governor is actually entitled to participate in the business of the Senate is in the case of a tie vote when he or she would cast the vote breaking the tie.

The President Pro Tem of the Senate. He or she is the leader of the Senate and serves as the chair of the Rules Committee and this individual is elected by the members, generally, at the start of the two-year session. The Pro Tem is presiding officer who oversees the appointment of committee members, the assignment of bills, and the confirmation of Gubernatorial appointees. And of course, he or she is also the political leader of the majority party.

The Majority Floor Leader is chosen by the Majority caucus and serves as the floor manager for the Pro Tem and the majority party. Also, is involved in political matters and strategy.

The Minority Floor Leader is the second most powerful position in the Senate because he or she is elected by the members of the minority caucus and maintains that party's activities and works with the Senate President Pro Tem to set the Senate's business.

Like the Assembly, there are Majority and Minority Whips who are basically assistants to the political leadership of the party in the State Senate and generally elected or appointed by their caucuses to help manage potential votes and they are served by Assistant Whips, both for the Majority and Minority parties.

And then, of course, there are the Democratic Caucus Chair and Republican Caucus Chair who are elected by their respective parties and they convene the caucus meetings. They provide political advice to the leadership. They manage the staff who provide constituent services and communication services.

And then there are two other elected members of the Senate similar to their counterparts of the Assembly. That's the Secretary of the Senate, who is one of three officers of the Senate. The other two are the Pro Tem and the Chief Sergeant of Arms. The Secretary of the Senate is the Chief Parliamentary and keeps the legislative records for that house. He or she is responsible for the accurate drafting of bills to the Governor and also services the Executive Officer for the Senate, which means he or she is in charge of the day to day administration of the budget, the personnel, accounting, contracting, etc. for the State Senate. Note that in the Assembly, this position is split in two. The elected Chief Clerk who services that body for bills as the Parliamentarian, but then the Assembly has a Chief Administrative Officer, CAO, who serves as the Executive Officer, if you will, of the Assembly. So again, it's two positions in the Assembly, its one in the State Senate.

The other elected position is the Chief Sergeant at Arms, similar to the Assembly, who is elected by the total membership of the Senate and is responsible maintaining order on the floor, in committees, and other meetings. Also, in charge of, essentially, their internal police agency. These individuals, the Deputy Sergeants also work with the CHP and their Assembly Sergeant counterparts to maintain security for the Capital and their offices. Not just in the State Capital, but also in the district offices.

Thanks for joining our podcast on the officers of the Legislature.