

GOVERNING

PUBLIC OFFICIALS OF THE YEAR 2008

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Contact: Josh Goodman
(202) 862-1439

Indiana's innovative governor, the consensus-building speaker of the Colorado House of Representatives, and the courageous district attorney of Dallas County are among the winners of **GOVERNING**'s Public Official of the Year awards for 2008, given in recognition of outstanding achievement in state and local government.

The winners also include the mayor of St. Petersburg, Florida; Baltimore's health director; a housing inspector in Dayton, Ohio; Hawaii's human services director; and Michigan's chief information security officer. "These public officials each asked tough questions," said Alan Ehrenhalt, **GOVERNING**'s executive editor, "and when they had their answers, they weren't afraid to act. Their leadership has led to unexpected progress—from reduced blight on foreclosed properties to the exoneration of inmates who were wrongly convicted to the removal of unsafe cold medicines from the shelves. These officials prove that by asking sometimes painful questions, smart, dedicated people can change government for the better."

This year's group of recipients is the fifteenth to be honored in **GOVERNING**'s annual awards program, which was launched in 1994. **GOVERNING** is an independent national magazine devoted to coverage of state and local government. It has a circulation of 85,000 state and local officials.

GOVERNING's 2008 Public Officials of the Year:



Indiana Governor **Mitch Daniels**, who championed landmark infrastructure and health care legislation, while improving the management of state government and putting his state on a sound fiscal footing.



Andrew Romanoff, speaker of the Colorado House of Representatives, who built a bipartisan coalition to take on the politically risky task of overhauling a constitutional provision that was crippling the state budget.



St. Petersburg Mayor **Rick Baker**, who spearheaded a building boom in his city's downtown while improving schools, parks and public facilities in neighborhoods throughout St. Petersburg.



Craig Watkins, district attorney of Dallas County, whose push for post-conviction DNA testing identified and freed inmates who had been wrongly imprisoned, many of whom had been behind bars for more than 20 years.



Joshua Sharfstein, Baltimore's health director, who led a national campaign that called into question the safety and effectiveness of children's cold medicines, prompting drug companies to pull the medications and resulting in new Food and Drug Administration rules.



Lillian Koller, director of the Hawaii Department of Human Services, who overhauled her state's system of dealing with at-risk children, cutting child abuse and reducing the number of children in foster care.



Dayton Housing Inspector **John Carter**, who untangled the webs of the mortgage services industry to determine which lending companies had the title to vacant properties, then worked with these companies to fix and maintain the abandoned homes.



Dan Lohrmann, Michigan's chief information security officer, whose pioneering efforts to keep state computers and networks secure are viewed as a model by technology officials around the country.

The award winners are profiled in the November issue of *Governing* and will be honored at a dinner November 12 in Washington, D.C., hosted by the magazine and by the corporate sponsors of the awards: **CGI, CH2M Hill, Northrop Grumman, Oracle** and **Unisys**.