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Lt. Governor Askins Announces Plans for Children, Tourism, Economic Development and Government Efficiency

OKLAHOMA CITY – Lt. Governor Jari Askins today announced her goals for 2007 to advance ambitious initiatives that will benefit children, tourism, economic development and government efficiency:

- **Establish The Askins Commission on Children.** Lt. Governor Askins will convene meetings of stakeholders, experts and the public to identify systemic problems facing Oklahoma's children and youth and develop comprehensive action plans that will provide real solutions. *The Askins Commission on Children* will focus on issues that threaten the healthy development and future success of Oklahoma's young people. The Commission will conduct fact-finding and research, identify best practices, and develop recommendations with the goal of releasing the 2007 Report of the Askins Commission on Children by November 1, 2007. Recommendations will be provided to legislators and other leaders throughout the state for comment and potential implementation through legislation and other means.
- **Maximize Oklahoma's Centennial Celebration.** Throughout the year, Lt. Governor Askins will promote Oklahoma Centennial activities and projects and use the heightened awareness of Oklahoma's resources and potential to encourage economic development, expand job creation and increase tourism. As Chair of the Tourism and Recreation Commission and given the historical involvement of the Office of Lt. Governor in economic development, Lt. Governor Askins will be integrally-involved in development of bold, new action plans that will build on the success of the Centennial and provide direction for an economic renaissance in Oklahoma's second century. The guiding principle for these innovative, results-based plans: *Believe it – Achieve it!*
- **Improve Government Efficiency and Effectiveness.** Through a partnership with the Oklahoma Auditor and Inspector's Office and collaboration with other state offices, Lt. Governor Askins will seek public input to identify more efficient ways to deliver government

services and will champion implementation of improved practices. The Auditor and Inspector's Office has established a web-based hotline seeking public input on government efficiency, effectiveness and fraud. Results will be forwarded to the Lt. Governor for development and support of improvement plans. This is the first step in Lt. Governor Askins' *Good Government Initiative* which will focus on innovative methods, legislation and common sense solutions to reducing bureaucracy and waste.

Keeping with tradition, in 2007 Lt. Governor Askins will also participate in and promote numerous events and activities, including the Lieutenant Governor's Annual Turkey Hunt, Small Business Day at the Capitol, and the Oklahoma Aerospace Summit and Expo.

The Oklahoma Constitution provides for the Lieutenant Governor to serve as President of the State Senate. In addition, she serves as a member on ten boards and commissions, and is Chair of the Oklahoma Tourism and Recreation Commission and Chair of the Oklahoma Film and Music Advisory Commission.

Askins became Oklahoma's 15th Lieutenant Governor and the first Democratic woman to hold the position when she was sworn in last month. She holds the rare distinction of serving Oklahoma in each of the three branches of government.