

Facing a criminal trial and possible impeachment, Governor Eric Greitens resigned effective June 1st, 2018. He was replaced with Lieutenant Governor Michael L. Parson, a farmer and small-business owner elected in 2016, who will remain in the post through the end of Mr. Greitens's term in January 2021.



Mike Parson

The Resignation of Governor Greitens

Eric Greitens took the Governor's Office in January 2017 after defeating Democratic challenger Chris Koster in the 2016 gubernatorial elections. Mr. Greitens vowed to clean up state government he said was corrupt. As quickly as he arrived on Missouri's political scene, his career ended under an avalanche of scandal and felony charges. Even as he announced his historic decision to step down, Greitens asserted his innocence and argued that he was the victim of a political conspiracy. Greitens is the first Missouri governor to resign since 1857 when Governor Trusten Polk left office during his second month as governor to take a U.S. Senate seat.

Mike Parson Taking Office

Mike Parson became the 57th governor of Missouri when he assumed office on June 1, 2018. He is associated with the Republican Party. Before taking office, Parson commented to the people of Missouri:

"With Governor Greitens' decision to resign from office, he has put the best interests of our state and all Missourians at the forefront where they belong. This is a decision that will allow our state to heal and move forward from what has been a difficult time. This is an enormous responsibility serving as our state's next governor, and I am ready to fulfill the duties of the office with honor and integrity, and with a steadfast commitment to making our great state even greater for the people we are entrusted to serve."

The Background of Mike Parson

Mr. Parson, who was raised on a farm in Hickory County, now runs "a cow and calf operation" in neighboring Polk County, according to his official state biography.

Mr. Parson, 62, has far more political experience than Mr. Greitens, whose run for governor in 2016 was his first campaign. After six years in the Army, Mr. Parson became the sheriff of Polk County, a conservative county near Springfield (it voted for President Trump by a nearly 57-point margin). He was sheriff from 1993 until 2005 when he was sworn into the Missouri House of Representatives. After serving in the House from 2005 to 2011, he was a state senator from 2011 until 2017.

The New Lieutenant Governor

Two weeks after assuming the Office of Governor, Mike Parson selected Republican Senator Mike Kehoe as his pick for lieutenant governor.

"The lieutenant governor is an important position, not just because of the duties assigned by Missouri law and the state Constitution, but also to reassure Missourians that all operations of state government will continue," Parson said. Calling the Jefferson City lawmaker steady, predictable and humble, Parson said Kehoe would play a key role in trying to improve the state's roads and bridges.



Mike Kehoe

After Governor Parson appointed his former colleague to the No. 2 post in state government, the Missouri Democratic Party filed a lawsuit seeking to require that the lieutenant governor position be filled only by an election. The Democrats point to legal and constitutional questions that surround the ability of a chief executive to fill a vacancy in the lieutenant governor's office. Stay tuned for more details from the court system in Missouri.

REVIEW QUESTIONS

TRUE OR FALSE? Write a **T** or **F** in the space provided.

- ___ 1. Mike Parson needed a special election to become governor.
- ___ 2. Mike Parson will keep office until the next gubernatorial election in 2020.
- ___ 3. Governor Greitens was the only Missouri official ever to resign.
- ___ 4. The party in control of the Office of Governor is the Republican Party.
- ___ 5. Mr. Parson has little political experience.
- ___ 6. There have been a total of 57 Missouri Governors that have assumed office.
- ___ 7. The next lieutenant governor's post will be up for reelection in 2023.

Answers: 1-F, 2-T, 3-F, 4-T, 5-F, 6-T, 7-F