

Presenter Bio

Ken Steward
Commissioner
Georgia Department of Economic Development

Commissioner Stewart was appointed to his post as Commissioner, Georgia Department of Economic Development, by Governor Sonny Perdue in January 2007. As chief marketing officer for the state of Georgia, he leads Georgia's efforts to recruit new businesses and expand existing ones; grow the state's tourism, international trade and entertainment industries; and support the growth of small businesses and entrepreneurs.

Mr. Stewart spent the majority of his career in private industry. He served as vice president of Unisource Worldwide, Inc., where he led the company's south-central sales and distribution division in addition to its retail and specialty manufacturing businesses. He also held several management positions at Georgia-Pacific, including director of enterprise development, senior director of strategic planning and analysis of G-P's distribution division, and director of state and local taxes. Mr. Stewart also worked for Weyerhaeuser Company and Mississippi Power & Light.

Mr. Stewart joined state government in September 2004, when he was appointed director of the Georgia Forestry Commission (GFC).

Commissioner Stewart is a member of the State Bar of Georgia, holding a Juris Doctorate from the Woodrow Wilson College of Law in Atlanta. He earned a B.S. in Business and a B.S. in Forestry from Mississippi State University. Mr. Stewart also served as a company commander in the Army National Guard.

Present and previous affiliations include Board of Directors Chair for the Georgia Centers of Innovation, the Georgia Tourism Foundation and Governor Perdue's Growing Georgia Cluster group of state agency heads. Commissioner Stewart serves on the boards of the OneGeorgia Authority, the Georgia Environmental Facilities Authority, the Georgia Chamber of Commerce and the Georgia Development Authority. He is a member of the Advisory Board for Georgia Tech's Enterprise Innovation Institute and the CDC Foundation's Atlanta Advisory Council. Mr. Stewart is past Board Chair of the Georgia Justice Project and was a member of the Governor's Energy Policy Council.