

NEWS RELEASE

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### **BCBSF's Hightower Installed as Insurance Council Chairman**

(Tallahassee, Fla.) -- Michael R. Hightower, Vice President, Governmental & Legislative Relations, Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Florida (BCBSF), is the new chairman of the Florida Insurance Council. The Council, based in Tallahassee, is a lobbying and public affairs association representing insurance companies. It is one of the largest state insurance associations in the United States, with 250 members who write more than \$12 billion a year in premium volume in Florida.

Hightower was installed on June 25 during FIC's 34<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference. As new chairman of the FIC Board of Directors, he succeeds Joseph J. Wallace Jr., Vice President and Chief Actuary, Guarantee Trust Life Insurance Company, Glenview, Ill.

He already has had a distinguished leadership career with FIC. For the last two years, he has played a very special role, serving as chairman of the Building Committee and directing construction of new FIC offices at 1430 East Piedmont Drive in northeast Tallahassee. FIC staff moved into the new facility on June 19, although some construction work continues. He has been a member of the FIC Executive Board for five years and has been involved with the Council for 15 years. He served as Treasurer in 1994-95.

Hightower joined BCBSF in Jacksonville in 1981 as Director of Governmental and Legislative Relations. He was promoted to his present position in 1985. Before joining BCBSF, he served as Florida State Director of the Farmers Home Administration, U.S. Department of Agriculture; and North Florida Region Field Director for the Florida State Comptroller.

His extensive civic activities in his hometown of Jacksonville include current service as Vice Chairman of the Florida Community College Board of Trustees and a member of the Board of Directors of the Jacksonville Electric Authority. He also serves on the Board of Directors of Youth Leadership, Jacksonville; is chairman of the Mayor's Base Conversion and Redevelopment Commission; and serves on the Board of Governors for the Jacksonville Chamber of Commerce.

Hightower received a Bachelors of Science degree from Jacksonville University in 1972. He and his wife, Sue, have a son, Parker, who is a student at Tallahassee Community College.

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