



Lee Fisher is the President and CEO of CEOs for Cities.

→ As President and CEO of CEOs for Cities, Lee leads a national network of cross-sector urban leaders who share the smartest ideas for city economic success. Lee is also a Senior Fellow with the Center for Economic Development at Cleveland State University's Levin College of Urban Affairs.

CEOs for Cities curates smart ideas and practices for city success, connects cross-sector urban leaders and changemakers, and catalyzes change in cities. The main focus of CEOs for Cities' work and research is in four areas:

- connecting physical, digital, human, and social capital
- innovation and entrepreneurship
- talent development, attraction, and retention
- strategic investments in the distinctive assets of cities

Lee has served as Ohio Lt. Governor, Director of the Ohio Department of Development, Chair of the Ohio Third Frontier Commission, Ohio Attorney General, State Senator, State Representative, and President/CEO of the Center for Families and Children, one of the largest human service nonprofits in the Midwest.

During the time Lee led Ohio's economic development efforts as Lt. Governor, Site Selection magazine awarded its highest economic development award, the Governor's Cup, to Ohio three consecutive years and with the Competitiveness Award, recognizing the Ohio Department of Development, under Lee's leadership, as the most effective economic development agency in the country. Lee also led the development of Ohio's first strategic plan for economic development.

As a freshman legislator in 1982, Lee was voted by his legislative colleagues and the Statehouse Press Corps as *Ohio's Outstanding Freshman Legislator*, in a survey by Columbus Monthly Magazine (1982). As a state legislator, Lee authored more than 10 Ohio laws, including the Missing Children Law, the Hate Crime Law, and the Crime Victims Assistance Law.

As Ohio Attorney General, Lee successfully defended the constitutionality of Ohio's Hate Crime law before the Ohio Supreme Court -the same law Lee authored as a State Senator years earlier. Under Lee's leadership, Ohio became the first state in the nation to require racial and cultural sensitivity training for new law enforcement officers.

Lee is a graduate of Harvard University's Program for Senior Executives in State and Local Government where he was a *Chase Public Leadership Fellow*; the Center for Creative Leadership's *Leadership at the Peak* program; the CWRU Weatherhead School of Management's *Professional Fellows Program*, and Leadership Cleveland. As a Case Western University *Presidential Fellow*, Lee taught two seminars on leadership, innovation, and collaboration. In 2008 and 2009, Lee was the only person in Ohio named as one of the "*Power 100*" Northeast Ohio leaders by Cleveland Magazine's Inside Business, and one of the top 100 Central Ohio leaders by Smart Business Columbus magazine.

Lee is a graduate of Oberlin College and served on the Oberlin College Board for 12 years. He earned both a law degree and master degree in nonprofit organization from Case Western Reserve University, and received the law school's first-ever Distinguished Recent Graduate Award.

Lee is married to Peggy Zone Fisher, the President and CEO of the Diversity Center of Northeast Ohio. They have two children, Jason (30) and Jessica (22).

What People Have Said About Lee Fisher's Talks

- *"Someone suggested we do a "highlight reel" as part of our 100th anniversary. So the problem is...half of them would be Lee Fisher Forums. Thank you, once again, for such a terrific program. Jim Foster, Executive Director, City Club of Cleveland*
- *"You were great and delivered a great message, people all over are talking about it! Donna Hardcastle, Executive Director, Argenta Downtown Council, Little Rock, Arkansas*

- *"I have heard many speeches and conference presentations on economic development over the years. In all sincerity, yours was the very best address I have ever heard on this important topic."* Daniel Johnson, President Emeritus and Distinguished Professor of Public Policy and Economic Development, University of Toledo
- *"We all enjoyed your talk tremendously, Lee. Inspiring!"* Dr. Lloyd Jacobs, President, University of Toledo
- *What more could anyone say? You were absolutely brilliant at the Close It Summit panel."* Dan DeMaioNewton, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt
- *If you ever get the chance to hear Lee Fisher speak, take advantage of it. I promise that you won't be disappointed.....a month later, his words still resonate. Seldom have I witnessed a presenter with his ability to communicate passion and purpose with such a commanding presence- and he did it without reading notes."* Ron Starner, Executive Director, Industrial Asset Management Council
- *"I have written and heard hundreds of speeches...Lee Fisher's speech was magnificent...he was the best speaker we have ever had at our Annual Luncheon."* Mark Policinski, Executive Director, Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Regional Council of Governments
- *"One of the best presentations I have attended in the ten years I have been a member of the Columbus Metropolitan Club."* George O'Donnel, Arshot Real Estate Investments
- *"We continue to great feedback on your presentation.... People will remember this one for sure.... The level of customization and local knowledge that you brought to the table was truly exceptional. It made your thoughts very relevant and quite powerful for our audience. The ideas and examples you gave us were thought provoking and will ultimately prove very useful. I would say...after several years of doing these sessions...that yours was probably the best presentation we have ever had."* Executive Vice President and Chief Economist, Fred Morley, Greater Halifax Partnership
- *"Thank you for a "right-on-the-mark" presentation for the Citi Foundation Convening. You were able to create a spirit of urgency/immediacy and need for action with lots of data that explained why people with ideas of what to do should act now to address the issues in their cities I especially appreciated the simple and bold images you provided, the graphs, the slides with few words had an impact. The participants were most impressed with your presentation (as was I)."* Linda Powell-McMillan, Director of Professional Learning and Program Development, AVID Center
- *"I wish you had stayed so you could hear the positive buzz about your presentation, Lee. Even this morning, I overheard comments about how much people enjoyed listening to you and how much they learned from you. Many thanks for your significant contributions to their leadership journey"* Marianne Crosley, President and CEO, Cleveland Leadership Center
- *"You were spot-on with your remarks- the insights you shared, the challenges you offered, the stories you told...the list goes on. How you captivated the audience, especially given the kind of day we had, was amazing."* Dr. Marcy Levy Shankman, Director, Leadership Cleveland

- *“I’ve heard from many attendees about how much they enjoyed and were spellbound by your presentation.”* Nikki Evans, Executive Director, Business Advisors of Cleveland
- *“As a 2008 graduate from the University of Toledo, I can honestly tell you that your comment about not remembering who spoke at my commencement is true. I have no idea who spoke at my graduation, but your speech on May 5, 2012 will stick with me for the rest of my life.”* David Scott, after Lee Fisher University of Toledo Commencement Speech
- *“You strike the perfect balance between gravitas and humor- a feat few accomplish.”* Eileen Figel, The Institute for Comprehensive Community Development
- *“You were just utterly amazing! I really mean that this is not an ego stroke.While you were so effortlessly delivering your remarks, without one note in front of you, I was observing the faces of some of the most successful businessmen in the country metaphorically in lock-jaw.”* Richard Stoff, President, Ohio Business Roundtable
- *“I have never before written to a speaker regarding any meeting, conference or presentation that I’ve ever attended. However, after listening to you yesterday at the Campus Philly Annual Meeting, I felt compelled to drop you a line and thank you for engaging me as well as the entire room in a very entertaining and informational program. I walked out feeling refreshed with a renewed commitment as the General Manager of Zipcar in Philadelphia, to do even more with Campus Philly.* Peter Bruvik, Zipcar
- *“Thank you for being the keynote for the Ohio Economic- Education Leadership Summit. Your ability to blend human stories, optimism, and realism... is an aspect of your leadership that I continue to appreciate and respect... Respondents to our evaluation survey overwhelmingly ranked your presentation as exemplary....”* Deborah Delisle, Ohio State Superintendent of Public Instruction
- *“My colleagues at Fort Washington Investment Advisors tell me you did a magnificent job on behalf of the Private Equity efforts in Ohio. Our crowd was most impressed, and I simply want to say thank you.”* John Barrett, President, CEO, and Chairman, Western & Southern Financial Group
- *“You lit the crowd on fire. The VC’s and others are still buzzing with their surprise that a State and politician that really gets it, not just paying lip service to innovation and growth.”* Baiju Shah, President, BioEnterprise
- *“The feedback from our members suggests that your message resonated terrifically with everyone, and stating that you will try to work at the ‘speed of business’ won high praises.”* Claiborne Rankin, Managing Member, North Coast Angel Fund
- *“Your speech on philanthropy and lobbying by charities was one of the best I’ve ever heard....Your message and the passion with which it was delivered was a real shot in the arm for me.”* Bob Smucker, Director, Charity Lobbying in the Public Interest