



The Honorable Jeb Bush

Former Governor of Florida, 1999–2006

Jeb Bush was the 43rd governor of the state of Florida, serving from 1999 through 2006. He was the third Republican elected to the state's highest office and the only Republican in the state's history to be reelected.

Governor Bush remained true to his conservative principles throughout his two terms—cutting \$20 billion in taxes, vetoing more than \$2.3 billion in earmarks and reducing the state government workforce by more than 13,000. His limited government approach unleashed one of the most robust economies in the nation, creating 1.4 million new jobs and improving the state's credit ratings on Wall Street.

To further strengthen the economy, Bush launched a strategic plan to diversify the state's business portfolio. After securing the second campus of the renowned Scripps Research Institute, an international leader in bio-

medical breakthroughs, Florida's life sciences industry began to flourish with several more leading research institutes investing in the state.

During his two terms, Bush championed major reform of government programs. In education, Florida raised academic standards, required accountability in public schools and created the most ambitious school choice program in the nation. After gaining permission from the federal government, Florida launched Medicaid Reform to improve quality and control the rising cost of the \$16 billion state-federal partnership that pays for the healthcare of 2.2 million poor, disabled and elderly citizens. The state also launched and accelerated restoration of America's Everglades, the largest project of its kind in the world, to save the habitat of 60 threatened and endangered species and provide a long-term supply of drinking water for 8 million people in South Florida.

On the national stage, Governor Bush is most widely known for his leadership during two unprecedented back-to-back hurricane seasons, which brought eight hurricanes to the state of Florida in less than two years. To protect the state from loss of life and damage caused by catastrophic events, such as hurricanes, Bush worked tirelessly to improve the state's ability to respond quickly and compassionately to emergencies, while also instilling a "culture of preparedness" in the state's citizenry.

Bush served as Florida's secretary of commerce under Bob Martinez, Florida's 40th governor. As secretary of commerce, he promoted Florida's business climate worldwide. Following an unsuccessful bid for governor in 1994, Bush founded the non-profit Foundation for Florida's Future, which joined forces with the Greater Miami Urban League to establish the state's first charter school, Liberty City Charter School, in one of the most underserved parts of Miami-Dade County. He then co-authored *Profiles in Character*, a book profiling 14 of Florida's civic heroes—people making a difference without claiming a single news headline.

Bush earned a bachelor's degree in Latin American affairs from the University of Texas at Austin. He moved to Florida in 1981, where he started a real estate development company with partner Armando Codina.