

2014 District 17 Senate Special Election Guide

Q&A

Dr. William W. "Bill" Canon

Age: 83

Political experience: I served in the Mississippi House of Representatives from 1976 -1979 and in the Mississippi State Senate from 1980-2003. I currently serve on the Mississippi Prison Industries Board, a non-profit, self-funded corporation, formed by the state in 1990, which offers individuals who are incarcerated opportunities to learn trades so they can rise above their circumstances and become productive citizens.

Education: Doctor of Veterinary Medicine Degree from Auburn University

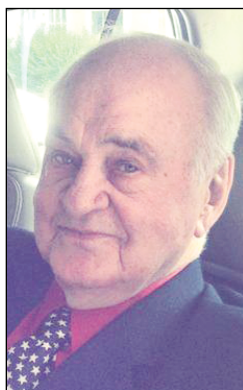
Residence: Sylvan Road, Columbus

Occupation: Veterinarian

Family: One daughter, Marjorie (Margie) Canon

E-mail: canonbill@hotmail.com

Phone: Home: (662) 328-3018 Cell: (662) 574-6604



I am the only candidate in this election with experience in the Mississippi Legislature. This gives me a unique perspective on problems and how to solve them. My leadership credentials speak for themselves. In the legislature, I served as Chairman of the County Affairs, Chairman of the Highways and Transportation Committee, and Chairman of the Legislative Performance and Evaluation Committee. Beyond that, I served 10 years as Chairman of the Advisory Committee of the Tennessee Tombigbee Bridge Construction. I am methodical about understanding issues before I take a stand and do not rush to judgment.

I believe this is an impossible question to answer because of the nature of government. Issues blend with each other in an almost seamless manner. For example, good roads and highways translate into growth for business and industry, which calls for a well trained workforce by having good schools and technical education programs in our junior colleges. Safety of families, homes and businesses must be addressed for all the above mentioned issues to be successful.

My position on this topic is "pay to play." The wise use of existing tax revenues and the TVA in lieu taxes to lure new industry and retain present industry is a good strategy for growing industry in Mississippi and providing our people with opportunities for good paying jobs. My BIPEC scores prove my record for promoting economic growth and jobs for Mississippi. I scored a 94 on the BIPEC Performance Evaluation which puts me in the category of Business Champion.

Yes, I agree. Millions of dollars have been spent on education in Mississippi. Some progress has been made, but we still have work to do. In the 1990s, I voted for the bill which became law making it possible for teachers in K-12 public schools to receive a \$6,000 pay raise upon achieving National Board Teaching Certification. This law rewards good teachers, improves teacher performance, and helps students achieve at higher levels. Certification lasts for 10 years and is renewable. The law funds five universities in Mississippi to provide support for teachers seeking certification. I will do more to help teachers actively seek this certification.

Bill Gavin

Age: 65

Political experience: Six years Columbus City Council, four years Vice-Mayor City of Columbus

Education: BS and Masters (Mississippi State University)

Residence: Jones Circle, Columbus

Occupation: Retired Educator

Family: Wife- Tammy, Daughter- Cori, Dog-Lucy

E-mail: bgavin@cableone.net

Phone: Home: 662-327-3323 Cell: 662-574-0295



I feel my six years of experience as a Columbus councilman and four years as vice mayor has set me apart. I have dealt with issues such as annexation, redistricting, employee insurance, city laws and policies, managing million dollar budgets, emergency management issues, federal grants, and economic development. My 37 years as an educator at the post-secondary and university levels give me an advantage in dealing with educational issues and making sure our local economy and education work together. Having owned and operated businesses, I understand profit and loss.

The economy. To ensure that state revenues grow, our state and local economies must grow. We must create new high-tech, good paying jobs. This can only be done by providing workers with the proper training and an attitude that will make new industry want to invest in Mississippi. Our tax dollars will be better served by providing better equipped teachers with instructional knowledge, adequate pay, and industry-related training that will assure good responsible workers for industries. By providing better education and quality trained workers, we can attract more and better industries.

I am in favor of "pay to play." However, this must be done as a wise investment with minimum risk. A main concern is the return on investment. Return on investment reaches way past surface data. We must look at the total number of dollars invested, jobs created, effect on local economy, quality of life, and the value of the industry to the community and the state long-term. Large industries can locate anywhere. If we are to be a player, we must put ourselves in a position to attract industries. Golden Triangle Development LINK CEO Joe Max Higgins has said it is hard to ask others to invest in you, unless you are willing to invest in yourself.

I agree education is critical. As an educator of 37 years, I feel this makes me qualified to address this issue. For years we have been last in education and have been told that for success we must provide more money. Money is not always the answer. I have seen how state tax dollars for education are spent. Students, educators, parents and state officials must understand that education and training begins with a "will to learn." Beginning at an early age, we must create an environment that will encourage students to succeed and to develop a work ethic conducive to industry. Students must possess self-pride, work ethics, and self-esteem.

Bobby Patrick

Age: 68

Political experience: I grew up in a household where my father, Pat Patrick, served Lowndes County for eight years as Coroner and Ranger and 12 years as a Justice Court Judge. I assisted his election by working to solicit votes, hand out campaign literature, and served as his runner for all campaign tasks.

Education: Graduated from Lee High School in Columbus in 1964 and from Mississippi State University in 1968 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science.

Residence: I am a life long resident of Columbus except for a five year interval after my college graduation in 1968 in which I was employed by out of state firms.

Occupation: Retired since Dec. 31, 2011. I was an independent insurance agency/owner for almost 40 years serving as an exclusive representative of State Farm Insurance Companies.

Family: I am married to the former Patsy P. Stokes and we have three daughters and 7 grandchildren.



I feel I am the best qualified person for the job because I have been an employer for over 40 years in the investment business and in the insurance business. My background is in professional sales and my ability to sell myself first and my product secondly makes me uniquely qualified to sell Lowndes County to prospective industrial bases seeking the best possible place to start and build a business. With a background in the municipal bond business, I know and understand the intricacies of municipal financing to build roads, streets, municipal improvements and businesses. I have served over 3,000 families in Lowndes County while operating my former insurance agency and I did so with a heart for service.

We have many pressing needs. Jobs, education, teen pregnancy, and violence are but a few. The most pressing of these is jobs that will enable a family to work and educate their children to do likewise. Workfare, rather than welfare, is tantamount to building a viable economic community. I would strongly support our educational institutions that concentrate on training the right people for the tasks given.

I strongly believe that we have to recruit strong businesses that have a background of success and have a healthy dose of start up capital with reserves for downward business trends. That being said, I support the "Pay to Play" philosophy. If we ever expect to continue to grow our industrial base, we have to be encouraging to potential companies that investigate our county to start or to grow their business. Our local CLEDA does an excellent job of protecting our investment by securing the land, buildings and other assets through a series of binding agreements.

I agree education is the building block from which all knowledge is derived. Blueprint Mississippi is an organization that, like me, believes educational achievement is the number one goal. Education leads to a more robust work force and a better standard of living. I do not support "Common Core." We do not need more government ramming another government mandate down our throat. I support empowering teachers and principals with the authority to teach as they have been taught. I also would push for rules that would empower principals and teachers to punish unruly and disruptive students. Lastly, I would push for more distributive education classes for kids wanting to learn a trade. Not everyone wants to attend college, but most want to earn a living.

Charles "Chuck" Younger

Age: 51

Political experience: This is my first time to run as a candidate. My family has devoted a lifetime of public service to the citizens of Lowndes County.

Education: Graduate of Heritage Academy, attended EMCC and Mississippi State University.

Residence: Lifelong resident of Lowndes County.

Occupation: Farmer/Rancher

Family: Married 27 years to Missy Goodgame of Aberdeen. We have three children, Joanna, Colton, and Michael Albert.

E-mail: cyounger@bellsouth.net

Phone: (662) 251-3432



I know and share the concerns of the citizens of Lowndes County. I've spent my entire life working, farming, and raising a family in our district. I am a self-employed farmer/rancher who understands the struggles of getting by on a tight budget. My goal, if elected, will be to work my hardest for our district to get ahead, instead of simply getting by.

The unemployment rate in our state is 7.4% and Lowndes County is 8.7%. The best way to address this issue is providing more educational opportunities for our children. The number one criteria industry looks to before relocating is the value of the local schools.

The Alabama's and Tennessee's of our region are not going to let up for competing industries. If we want to be successful in luring industry to our area, and providing jobs to our citizens, we have to be competitive in this area. We have to make sure companies fulfill their commitment in the number of jobs they provide. The LINK and our local leadership have a very successful history of winning industry to our region. As your state senator I will continue to support the local efforts of these leaders.

I do agree. Early childhood intervention and vocational opportunities are essential to a good workforce in our community. Also dual enrollment for high school students, a program that allows seniors to earn college credits, is a jumpstart in planning a career. Mississippi is consistently ranked last in educational opportunities nationally, and teachers are some of the lowest paid in the country. With an improved educational system we position ourselves to industries to relocate in our district, creating more jobs for our citizens.