

Brandon Rue

Mississippi House of Representatives District 102

ABOUT THE CANDIDATE



LEARN MORE

BRANDON RUE
www.brandonrue.org



Brandon Rue is a native of Meridian, MS. He is a Communications Studies Major with a Double Minor in Political Science and Psychology at The University of Southern Mississippi. Brandon's passion for the youth is not only in the church; he founded a non-profit organization, Elevate, to promote leadership and empowerment, provide exposure to a variety of career options, promote pro-social behavior, and endorse the importance of being responsible. The organization completes these objectives by working with 5th grade students at Woodley Elementary School in Hattiesburg, MS.

Since entering college, Brandon has worked hard to change the narrative that young people do not care about politics and don't vote, as he has worked with multiple organizations and movements to create change. Brandon has worked with Common Cause, a national bipartisan organization that fights for the common-sense rights of people. He has also done work for the Poor People's Campaign, which strives to provide a voice for the voiceless.

Brandon's activism has really flourished during his time at the University of Southern Mississippi, as he has registered over 1500 of his peers to vote. He has also created and led marches and walks to polling precincts to promote the importance of voting. Brandon is no stranger to campaigns either, as he has already worked on four different campaigns during his time in college. He began his political work by volunteering for Johnny Dupree in his re-election bid for Mayor. He then continued by working for Kathryn Rehner in her state legislature race, Representative Jeramey Anderson in his bid for United States Congress, and Secretary Mike Espy when he ran for United States Senate.

Brandon aspires to give the people a true representative - one who wants to hear from the people and give them a voice. He believes the most effective way to help people is by being the one in the seat making the decisions instead of lobbying someone else to think like you. He wants to be an elected official to give the people that voice. One day Brandon anticipates being called Mr. President, and giving the people a voice from the nation's highest office.

SOCIAL MEDIA + LINKS

SDP ACTBLUE LINK <https://secure.actblue.com/donate/sdp-ms-rue>

WEBSITE www.brandonrue.org

FACEBOOK www.facebook.com/brandonrueforhousedistrict102

TWITTER www.twitter.com/rue_brandon

INSTAGRAM www.instagram.com/brandon_rue_

DATA ABOUT THE DISTRICT

Population	Households	Over 65	White	Black	Latinx	Median Income	Below Poverty Line	Unemployed	College Grads	HS Grads	No HS Grad
25087	9628	10.6%	58.7%	34.1%	3%	37769	3.21%	8.40%	47%	44.50%	8.5%

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PAST RACES

Congressional Districts

Nested Congressional Districts: CD4 (Cook PVI: R+21)
Learn more about Cook Political Ratings (Partisan Voting Index):
<https://cookpolitical.com/ratings>

2017 House of Representatives Special Election Results

Missy Warren McGee (Nonpartisan)	67.8%	2,110
Kathryn Rehner (Nonpartisan)	32.2%	1,000

A special election for the position of Mississippi House of Representatives District 102 was called for September 12, 2017. A runoff election was held on October 3, 2017. The filing deadline for candidates wishing to run in this election was July 24, 2017.[6]
The seat became vacant in June 2017 after Toby Barker (R) was elected as the mayor of Hattiesburg.

2015 House of Representatives Election Results

Taylor Brinkley	27.2%	1,310
Toby Barker (Incumbent)	72.8%	3,502

2015 House of Representatives Fundraising

Democrat	\$33,137
Republican	\$136,033

2018 Senate Results

Mike Espy	48.88%	10,707
Cindy Hyde-Smith	51.12%	11,196

2015 Attorney General

Jim Hood	52.88%	2,531
Mike Hurst	47.12%	2,255

2016 President

Hillary Clinton	42%	12,167
Donald Trump	55%	15,842

ON THE ISSUES

ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

Small Business

Small business is what really drives an economy. If we have businesses that start here [in Mississippi], grow here, and pay taxes here, our economy would benefit so much from building from the inside out!

Economic Development

I have always been a believer in small business growth and development playing a big role in establishing a strong economic system. Having

businesses that are started and grown in Mississippi is key! A strong small business system provides more jobs to the community than bringing in large corporations. If done correctly, our small business system can entice people to stay in state instead of leaving to find a better opportunity. We have to provide better opportunities here.

Minimum Wage

I believe that every state should have their own minimum wage because every state is different. We need a minimum wage that ensures a comfortable living for the residents of our state!

Loan and Grant System

I believe that we should simplify the loan and grant system in our state. The process should not be so difficult to the point that certain people in our state cannot get it. We must show our fellow Mississippians that we believe in their ability to be economically successful!

HEALTH

Mental Health

Mental health is something that we should pay attention to. There are people dying because of this, and there is not enough being done about it. We must find a way to increase awareness.

Health Care For All

Everyone should have the right to health care. Insurance companies should not be able to decline anyone for any reason. Everyone has a right to be able to seek health care without fear of debt.

Hospital Closures

There should not be hospitals being forced to close in our state because of inadequate funding. Is partisan beef really worth people's lives? I don't think so and it needs to stop.

PUBLIC EDUCATION SUPPORT

Funding

As a state, we must realize that we have to invest in our students. We have bright and talented students who are being cheated out of a quality educational experience because we will not prioritize fully funding schools.

Teachers

We are losing our best teachers because of the amount we pay. We can never pay teachers what they are truly worth because they are too valuable, but we can do a lot better than what we currently pay.

College Affordability

College should not be totally free, but there has to be a system that would allow students who currently cannot afford college a chance to receive a higher education without being buried in debt later.

K-12

K-12 education should be fully funded. We have to realize that our greatest resource as a state is having a well educated population. A way

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we can improve quality is by providing adequate funds.

Family First

I believe that we should employ a family first strategy to help our schools succeed. We have great teachers who teach their best in the classroom, but they are fighting an unfair fight. We have to start paying attention to the outside factors that affect a child's performance in the classroom. Family First!

Appreciation

We must show our teachers that they are appreciated. We will never be able to pay them what they are truly worth but we can show them how much we appreciate them.

EQUAL RIGHTS

A Culture of Non-Discrimination

There should not be people in our state who do not feel comfortable going to certain places of business because of discriminatory laws in our state. There should not be any group of people who are afraid to go cast a vote because of certain laws in our state!

ABOUT THE STATE

General Demographics:

- As of July 2018, there is estimated to be 2.99 million people living in Mississippi, per the US Census.
- The state population has not grown substantially in the past ten years, due to a decline in birth rates and because Mississippi is not a destination for immigrants or migration from other states.
- 56.7% of the state is non-Hispanic White (1.7 million people) and 37.8% of the state is Black/African American (1.13 million people).
- 76.1% of the state is over the age of 18 (2.27 million people). 15.5% of the state is 65 years or older.
- In 2008, 347,400 people were 65 years old or older in the state—a number that has been steadily rising. In 2017, there were 451,200 people 65 years or older.
- In 2013, there were 325,300 adults age 26-34—a number that has been steadily declining. In 2017, there were 303,900 adults age 26-34.
- The median household income is \$42k, and 19.8% of people are in poverty (591k people). The national median household income according to the 2016 U.S. Census Bureau is \$55,516 and the national poverty rate was 12.7%
- In 2013, the unemployment rate was 8.4%. It has been steadily declining. In 2018, the unemployment rate was 4.8%. By comparison, The US unemployment rate was unchanged at a 49-year low of 3.7% in November 2018.

Senate and Congress

One Senator and four Representatives whose seats will be up for election in 2020. This includes Republicans Cindy Hyde-Smith, Trenty Kelly, Michael Guest, Steven Palazzo, and Democrat Bennie Thompson.

Gubernatorial

Mississippi limits governors to two terms. The current governor, Republican Phil Bryant, completes his two terms in 2019. The Republican candidate for governor is the current lieutenant governor, Tate Reeves, who is considered the heir-apparent by Republicans. When he announced his intention to run at the GOP headquarters, he had already raised more than \$5 million. But Attorney General Jim Hood, known as the "last Democrat in Dixie" announced his intent to run in October. He is considered very popular and has strong support in rural and North Mississippi.

District Lines:

Both congressional and state district boundaries are drawn by the state legislature. State legislative district boundaries must be approved as joint resolution and are not subject to governor veto, however congressional boundaries are approved by regular legislation and as such are subject to veto by the governor of Mississippi.

45% of the population is registered Republican and 37% Democrat in 2017. Based on historical patterns, Mississippi's districts have been gerrymandered to favor Republicans, but as of March 2019, 36% of seats in both the state Senate and state House of Representatives are held by members of the Democratic Party.

Mississippi's gerrymandering has been the subject of recent litigation. Mississippi District 22 was recently ordered to redraw the district based on Thomas v. Bryant. The proposed district line change would increase the black voting age population for 50.8% to 60%, reversing the dilution of African American votes. In February, there was an appeal made to the court by the defendants and a stay of remedial map drawing has been requested, but that stay has been denied and the new maps will be implemented for the 2019 elections.

Voter Registration:

To register to vote you must meet the following criteria:

- Be a citizen of the United States
- Be a resident of Mississippi
- Be 18 years old at the time of the next election
- Live in the town in which you are registering to vote for at least 30 days prior to election
- Not be disenfranchised because of conviction for one of 22 listed crimes (see below)

Last Day:

Registration must be completed 30 days prior to the election. The primary is on August 6, 2019, the primary runoff is on August 27, and the general election is on November 5. The filing deadline for candidates was March 1, 2019.

- For the November Election you must register by Tuesday, October 7th, 2019.
- The last day for Voter Registration is Monday, May 20, 2019 for the June Primary.
- Primary: Aug. 6
- General election: Nov. 5

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- Voter registration deadline: Oct. 7
- Early voting: N/A
- Absentee voting deadline: Nov. 4
- Online registration: No
- Same-day registration: No
- Voter ID: Photo ID required
- Poll times: 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Absentee Voting:

Mississippi does not permit early voting or no-excuse absentee voting. Valid excuses for voting absentee rather than physically going to the polls are:

Scheduled travel on Election Day

Being a student or teacher

Having a disability or caring for someone with a disability

Being 65 years old or older

Being required to work on Election Day.

There is no specific deadline for applying for an absentee ballot, assuming you are already registered to vote. The absentee ballot must be returned by 5 p.m. on the day before the election.

Since a 2011 amendment which took effect in 2014, Mississippi voters are required to present photo identification in order to vote in person, but not to vote absentee. Acceptable IDs include:

- Driver's license
- Photo ID card issued by a branch, department, or entity of the State of Mississippi
- United States passport
- Government employee ID card
- Firearms license
- Student photo ID issued by an accredited Mississippi university, college, or community/junior college,
- United States military ID
- Tribal photo ID
- Any other photo ID issued by any branch, department, agency or entity of the United States government or any State government
- Mississippi Voter Identification Card

Voter Suppression:

There is significant voter suppression in Mississippi, both through the criteria that makes one eligible to register to vote and the requirements to actually exercise their right. In terms of eligibility, individuals convicted of one of 22 specific felony crimes permanently lose the right to vote, even after they have served their time. In 2016, 218,181 people—which includes one in six African American adults in the state—were disenfranchised due to this restriction. Additionally, restrictive voter ID laws (see above) make it difficult for many eligible voters to actually exercise their right.

There is ample evidence that these voter suppression tactics are employed by the right in order to suppress Democratic votes. For

example, in 2018 a video of Senator Cindy Hyde-Smith speaking with a small crowd was leaked on Twitter. “And then they remind me that there’s a lot of liberal folks in those other schools who maybe we don’t want to vote,” she says in the video. “Maybe we want to make it just a little more difficult. And I think that’s a great idea.” Original tweet.

There is currently a lawsuit arguing that this change to criteria was intended to discriminate on the basis of race and violates the First and Eighth Amendments of the US Constitution as well as the equal protection clause of the 14th Amendment.

The 22 felonies that permanently disenfranchise Mississippians are: armed robbery, arson, bigamy, bribery, carjacking, embezzlement, extortion, felony bad check, felony shoplifting, forgery, larceny, murder, obtaining money or goods under false pretense, perjury, rape, receiving stolen property, robbery, statutory rape, theft, timber larceny, and unlawful taking of a vehicle.

All others retain their voting rights, even while in prison. Re-enfranchisement for those who have lost the right to vote can only be granted through a bill passed by both houses of the legislature or through the Governor.

Current State Legislature

Mississippi is a Republican trifecta; Republicans control the Governorship and both chambers of the legislature. The entire Mississippi state legislature is up for election in 2019, and these are all “Last Chance” races – the legislators who are elected in 2019 will draw district lines during the 2021 redistricting. The current Governor is a Republican, but is term-limited in 2019 and cannot run again. The Governor does not have the power to veto district maps drawn by the state legislature.

The state senate is currently comprised of 19 Democrats and 33 Republicans. The house currently has 47 Democrats and 73 Republicans. The gubernatorial election is competitive, particularly in this open race. The Democratic gubernatorial candidate is viable and well-liked: he is the current state attorney general, Jim Hood. Building momentum at the bottom of the ticket will benefit the top of the ticket too in this critical redistricting moment.

Mississippi is also poised to make big gains this year. The South is rising, as evidenced by the Doug Jones victory in Alabama, and the near wins of Stacey Abrams in Georgia, Andrew Gillum in Florida, and, of course, Mike Espy in Mississippi—all propelled by people of color, women, and young people. The infrastructure and voter data that was generated during the Espy race can be put toward Democratic efforts this year. The energy around certain progressive issues is also strong and has the ability to bring people across the aisle. In our conversations with stakeholders across the state, we have seen a tremendous amount of energy and strategy stemming from efforts make public education better for everyone.

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Takeaways:

- **Population Demographics.** The population is generally getting older and is majority white. At 37.3%, Mississippi has the largest African-American population of any state, though the District of Columbia is higher at 50.7%. The unemployment rate has stabilized in the past five years to 4.8%.
- **How MS Compares.** 14.2% of Mississippians under the age of 65 do not have health insurance, and 19.8% of people are in poverty. The national averages are 8.8% and 12.7%, respectively.
- **Opportunities this Year** - The entire state legislature is up for election in 2019. The Gubernatorial race is also competitive - it is an open seat with a well-known and well-liked Democratic candidate.

Mike Epsy boosts young house candidate endorsement

<http://www.jacksonfreepress.com/news/2019/feb/25/mike-espys-boosts-young-house-candidate-endorsement/>

21 Year old USM student eyeing becoming the youngest house representative elected in history

<https://www.gulflive.com/news/2019/02/21-year-old-usm-student-eyeing-becoming-the-youngest-house-representative-elected-in-us-history.html>

ABOUT THE OPPONENT

Missy Warren McGee (Republican) is a candidate seeking election to the Mississippi House of Representatives to represent District 102. McGee is running in the primary on August 6, 2019. The general election is November 5, 2019. She was first elected to the chamber in a special election on October 3, 2017.

2018 Scorecard

In 2018, the Mississippi State Legislature was in session from January 2 through March 28.

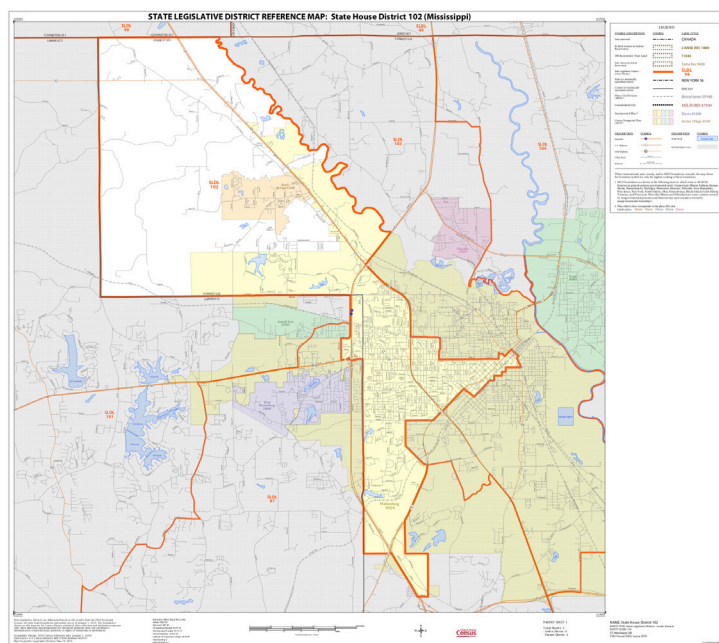
ACLU Mississippi

Legislators are scored by the ACLU on their whether their votes on bills "promote racial, cultural, and economic justice." McGee received a grade of D+ for her votes in the 2018 session.

Business and Industry Political Education Committee

Legislators are scored on their votes on bills related to (conservative) business and economic issues. McGee received a grade of B for her votes in the 2018 session.

THE DISTRICT



CANDIDATE IN THE NEWS

Brandon Rue to announce political campaign

<http://www.studentprintz.com/brandon-rue-to-announce-political-campaign/>

Brandon Rue a southern Miss activist who has walked hundreds of students to the polls

<http://deepsouthvoice.com/index.php/2018/11/26/brandon-rue-a-southern-miss-activist-who-has-walked-hundreds-of-students-to-the-polls/>