



State of South Carolina Office of the Governor

Mark Sanford Biography

Mark Sanford was elected as South Carolina's 115th governor on November 5, 2002. He was sworn in and took office on January 15, 2003.

With an eye on efficiency, cost-savings and value to the taxpayer, Governor Sanford has undertaken a top-to-bottom review of South Carolina's governmental structure during his first few months in office. In addition to holding in-depth budget hearings with over thirty individual state agencies, Gov. Sanford's Cabinet agencies have already saved taxpayers millions of dollars with innovative new initiatives designed to streamline operations and eliminate waste and duplication in government. For example, his Commerce Department has reduced staff by 25% and consolidated office space to the tune of \$1.3 million savings annually.

Gov. Sanford has also brought the long-troubled South Carolina Department of Motor Vehicles into his Cabinet, instituting a series of internal reforms that have dramatically reduced wait times, improved customer service and lowered costs. South Carolinians who once stood in line for hours at DMV offices can now perform most of their transactions online, and Saturday office hours have offered even more choice to the customer.

Gov. Sanford, who campaigned on opening up South Carolina's political process, also signed landmark campaign finance reform and Commerce Department disclosure reform bills in 2003, two measures that have brought much needed sunlight and accountability to state government. The governor holds "Open Door After 4" meetings every month in his office, chatting one-on-one with individual South Carolinians and listening to their questions and concerns. The governor also holds regular "Neighborhood Office Hours," traveling to different corners of the state to meet with citizens.

Prior to being elected as governor in 2002, Gov. Sanford lived on the South Carolina coast with his wife, Jenny, and their four young sons, Marshall, Landon, Bolton and Blake. Gov. Sanford served six years in the U.S. Congress prior to his election as governor, serving on the Joint Tax Committee and International Relations Committee, among others, before voluntarily stepping down in 2001 to honor a personal commitment to limit his time in Washington. He had no prior political experience before being elected to Congress in 1994.

During his time in Washington, D.C., Gov. Sanford was a tireless advocate for the taxpayer. For his consistent efforts to lower taxes and limit government growth he was ranked #1 in the entire Congress by Citizens Against Government Waste. He was rated similarly by the National Taxpayers' Union and Taxpayers for Common Sense inducted him into the Taxpayer Hall of Fame. In his own office, he backed his voting record with personal action – returning over \$250,000 (almost a third of his total office budget) each year to the taxpayers.

Gov. Sanford learned the themes of hard work and frugality with two brothers and a sister on their family farm near Beaufort, S.C. He graduated from high school in Beaufort before attending Furman University in Greenville, S.C., where he received a B.A. in business. He later received an M.B.A. from the University of Virginia's Darden School of Business and went on to work in real estate finance and investment in New York and Charleston, S.C.