

Phil Bredesen

Phil Bredesen is the former Governor of Tennessee. Bredesen was raised in rural New York and attended Harvard, earning a degree in physics. Upon graduation Bredesen worked on a classified project with Itek, a defense contractor, through the Vietnam War. In 1975 he moved to Tennessee and worked in healthcare before launching an unsuccessful campaign for mayor of Nashville in 1987. In 1991 Bredesen ran again and was elected mayor of Nashville. After two terms as mayor, Bredesen ran for governor. He lost in his first attempt, but then won the governorship in 2002. As governor, Bredesen signed the HOPE scholarship into effect, and he dealt with the Great Recession by cutting budgets, including TennCare, but he did not cut the education budget.



Bredesen's Positions

Healthcare: Bredesen supports the Affordable Care Act, but he believes changes need to be made.

"There certainly were a lot of people covered [by the Affordable Care Act]. I was a democrat who had issues with the Affordable Care Act in the way it was structured. I think some of those are starting to play out, but there is no question there are a lot of people in Tennessee who benefited from the access to healthcare provided... I am hoping we can see our way clear to make some of the adjustments we need to make it more sustainable than the way it is now."
C-Span interview, October 12, 2017

Education: Bredesen supports Common Core curriculum. He has not taken a position on charter schools in his Senate campaign, but as governor he expanded access to them.

"Children at-risk will benefit from expanded access to charter schools, just as they have benefited from access to high-quality Pre-K. While charter schools are not the answer for every child, they increase competition, which is great for public education. As more schools are forced to adopt best practices for all students, our entire system is strengthened."

- Bill Signing for Charter School Expansions, July 14, 2009

Signing Record

Signed HOPE Scholarship, allowing state lottery money to fund secondary education

Signed Charter School Expansion, increasing prospective charter school students

Signed the Long-Term Care Community Choices Act of 2008, providing community-based alternatives to nursing homes for the elderly and people with physical disabilities